Considerations

OF THE

Existence of GOD,

AND OF THE

Immortality of the Soul,

WITH

The Recompences of the future state.

To which is now added,

The Divinity of the Christian Religion proved by the evidence of Reason, and Divine Revelation:

For the Cure of INFIDELITY, the Hectick Evil of the Times.

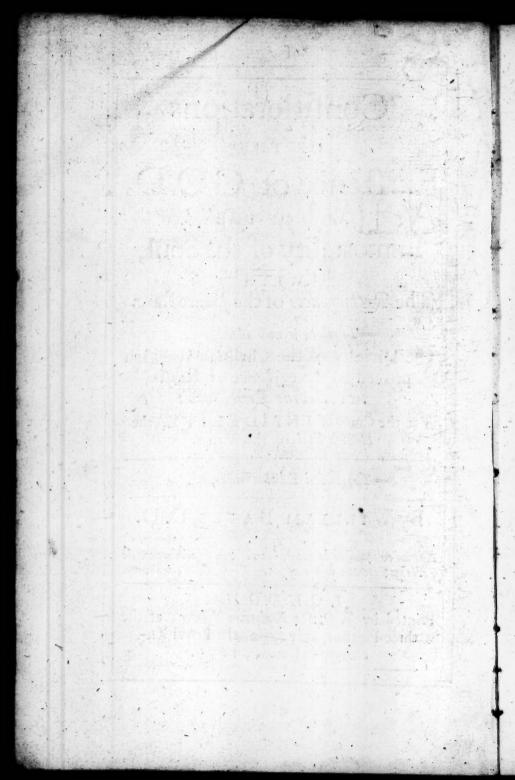
The Second Edition enlarged.

By WILLIAM BATES, D. D.

Πάντες συμφωνέσιν οι σεφοί, έαυτες έτω σεμνιμώντες, ώς νες ες βασιλευς έξανε κληνίς. Plat. in Phileb.

LONDON,

Printed by J. D. for Brabazon Aylmer, at the three Pigeons, over against the Royal Exchange in Cornbil, 1677.





He ufual Method whereby the Enemy of Mankind trains so many into his bloody snares, is by enticing the lower Facul-

ties, the Senses, the Fancy, and Passions to prevail upon the Will and Mind, and accordingly his motives are Pleasure or Pain that affect us from sensible things. But on the contrary, the great Lover of Souls first enlightens the Understanding to discover what is the most excellent Good, what the most pernicious Evil, and by that discovery moves the Will to pursue the one, and fly from the other, and so descends to work up-

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on the Affections and Senses, that with readiness they follow the Direction and Command of the Superior Powers in Man. These Objects being spiritual and future, and therefore rais'd above the highest Regions of Sense, are only apprehended and become effectual by the evidence of Faith. As the Spartan in Plutarch after trying many ways to Set a Carcassupright in a living posture, and finding that all his endeavours were vain, it was so suddenly discompos'd, the Head sinking into the Bosom, the Hands falling, and all the parts in disorder, concluded something was wanting within, that is the living Soul, without which the Body has no strength to support it self. Thus the most convincing Reasons, prest with the greatest vehemence of Affection, all the Powers of the World to come are of no Efficacy upon those who have not Faith, the vital Principle of all Heavenly Operations,

We live in an Infidel Age, wherein Wickedness reigns with Reputation. The thoughts of the Mind are discovered by the current of the Actions. Were there a serious belief of the great Judgment, and the terrible Eternity that follows, it were not possible for Men to fin so freely, and go on in a War so desperate against God himself. Sensuality and Infidelity are Elements of a Symbolical quality, and by an easie alteration are chang'd into one another. Fleshly Lusts darken the Mind, and render it unfit to take a distinct view of Things Sublime and Spiritual. They hinder serious Consideration, (especially of what may trouble the Conscience) by their impetuous Disorders. And which is the worst effect, the corrupt Will bribes the Mind to argue for what it desires. 'Tis the interest of Carnalists to put out the eye of Reason, the prevision of things eternal, that they

*Epicuri de gregi Porcum. Hor.

may blindly follow the sensual Appetite. Thus Epicurus with his Herd (as * one of them stiles that Fraternity) denied the Immortality of the Soul, confonantly to his declared Principle, that the Supreme Happiness of Man confifted in the delights of Sense. And tis as natural that the disbelief of another state bereafter should strongly encline Men to follow their Licentious Pleasures. If the Soul, according to the impious fancy of those Infidels described in the Book of Wisdom, be a spark of Fire that preserves the vital heat for a little time, and gives motion to the Members, Vigor to the Senses, and Spirits for the Thoughts, but is quench'd in Death, and nothing remains but a wretched heap of Ashes, What preeminence has Man above a Beaft? It follows therefore in the progress of their Reason'tis equal to include their Appetites as the Beasts do. If what is Im-

Immortal puts on Mortality, the consequence is natural, Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we must die.

Now though supernatural Revelation confirm'd by Miracles, and the continual accomplishment of Prophecies, has brought Life and Immortality into that openlight, that the meanest Christian has a fuller and more certain evidence of it, than the clearest spirits of the Heathens ever had; yet because the weight of Authority is of no force with Libertines, tis necessary to argue from common Principles, which they cannot disavow. Indeed the Shield of Faith, and the Sword of the Spirit are our best Defence in the Holy War; but with the use of equal Arms, Reasons against Reasons, the cause of Religion will be victorious.

'In the design of the ensuing Treatise to discover by the light of Nature invisible

Spirit made and governs the sensible World; that there is an Immortal Soul in Man, and an Eternal state of Happiness or Misery expects him hereafter. There is such a necessary Connexion between these Supreme Truths, The Being of God, and future Recompences to Men, that the denial of the one, includes the denial of the other. This uncertain which of the two is the first step, whether Men descend from the disbelief of the future state to Atheism, or from Atheism to Insidelity in that point.

Some excellent Persons have imployed their Talents on this Subject, from whom I have received advantage in compiling the present Work. I have been careful not to build upon false Arches, but on substantial Proofs, and to persuade Truth with Truth, as becomes a sincere Counsellor and well-willer

ler to Souls. And if the secure Person will but attentively and impartially con-(ider, he must be convinc'd that 'tis the only true Wisdom to believe and prevent, and not venture on the tryal of things in that state, where there is no other mending of the error, but an everlasting forrow for it. Those whose Hearts are so irrecoverably depraved, that no motives can persuade to examine what fo nearly touches them with calmine & and sobriety, and their minds so fatally stupified that no Arguments can awaken, must miserably feel what they wilfully doubt of; whom the Light does not convince, the Fire (hall.

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Take notice, that in the setting down the Heads of Arguments against Athelian, pag.4. The third Head should have been in the second place.



OF THE

EXISTENCE

OF

GOD.

CHAP. I.

Atheism is fearful of publick discovery.

Four Heads of Arguments to prove the Being of GOD.

I. The visible frame of the World, and the numerous Natures in it, exactly modelled for the good of the whole, prove it to be the work of a most wise Agent. The World consider'd in its several parts. The Sun in its situation, motion,



The Existence

tion, and effects, declare the Providence of the Creator. The diurnal motion of the Sun from East to West is very beneficial to Nature. The annual course brings admirable advantage to it. The gradual passing of the sensible World, from the excess of heat to the extremity of cold, an effect of Providence. The constant revolutions of Day and Night, and of the Seasons of the Year, discovers that a wise Cause orders them.



N the managing the present Subject, I shall first propound fuch things as clearly discover that a So-

veraign Spirit, rich in Goodness, most wise in Counsel, and powerful in Operation, gave being to the World, and Man in it. This

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part

part of my Work may seem need-Chap. I. less, because there are very few, if any, declared Atheists. As Monsters remain where they are born, in the defert Sands of Africa, not feen, unless fought for : fo there are some unnatural Enormities, that conscious how execrable they are, conceal themselves in secret, and dare not appear in open view. And of all others, no impiety is so monstrous and fearful of publick discovery as Atheism. But, The fool saith in his heart there is no God. He secretly whispers in contradiction to Nature, Reason, Conscience, Authorities, there is no fupream invisible Power to whom he is accountable. And having thus concluded in the dark, he loses all reverence of the Divine Laws, and makes himself a God, his carnal vicious appetite the su-B 2 pream

Chap. 1.

pream rule, and the satisfaction of it his chief Good. That many in our times, even of the great Pretenders to Wit and Reason, are guilty of this extream folly, is sadly evident. They live as absolute Atheists, only refuse the title for fear of infamy, or punishment. It will therefore not be unseasonable to revive the natural Notion of the Deity. Now to establish this Truth no Arguments are more convincing than what are level to all understandings. And those are,

I. The visible frame of the World, and the numerous natures in it, all model'd by this supream Rule, the good of the whole.

II. The Evidences that prove the World had a begining in time.

III. The usual and the extraordinary Works of Providence towards wards Men, according to the mo-Chap ral quality of their actions.

IV The universal sence of the Deity imprest on the minds of Men.

1. The first Reason is clear and intelligible to all: for 'tis the infeparable property of an intellectual Agent to propound an End, to judg of the convenience between the Means and it, and to contrive them in fuch a manner as to accomplish it. Now if we survey the Universe, and all the Beings it contains, their Proportion, Dependence and Harmony, it will fully appear that antecedently to its Existence, there was a perfect Mind that design'd it, and disposed the various parts in that exact order, * Vitrue.

Pref. 1.6. that one beautiful World is compos'd of them. The * Philosopher conjectured truly, who being shipwrackt on the Island of Rhodes, B 3

Chap. 1. Rhodes, and come to the shore, spying some Mathematical figures drawn on the Sand, cry'd out with joy, Vestigia hominum video, I see the footsteps of Men, and comforted his dispairing Companions, that they were not cast into a Desert, or place of Savages, but of Men civil and wife, as he discover'd by those impressions of their minds. And if we observe the frame of the World, the concatenation of the superiour with the middle, and of the middle with the lower parts, whereby 'tis not an accidental aggregation of Bodies, but an intire Universe; if we consider the just disposing them conveniently to their nature and dignity, the inferiour and less noble depending on the superiour, and that so many contrary natures with that fidelity and league of mutual

mutual love embrace and assist C each other, that every one working according to its peculiar quality, yet all unite their operations for one general end, the preservation and benefit of the whole, must we not strongly conclude that its the work of a designing and most wise Agent?

---Pulchrum pulcherrimus ipfe Mundum mente gerens, similique

ab imagine formans.

To make this more evident, I will

produce some Instances.

The Sun, of all celestial Bodies the most excellent in beauty and usefulness, does in its situation, motion, effects, publish the glory of a most wise Providence.

Providence could not design to place it better with respect to its Dignity, or with respect to the B4 Celestial

Chap. 1.

Celestial Bodies, or the benefit of the lower World, For 'tis plac'd where the Stars by reflecting his glorious Light, as Tributaries do homage to him their Sovereign, the fountain of their beauty. 'Tis in the midst of the Planets, to enlighten them with his brightness, and enkindle them with his fire, and thereby derive to them fuch benign qualities and activities, that make them beneficial to mixt bodies. Tis the Heart of the World, wherein all the vital Spirits are prepared, and 'tis fo conveniently seated as to transmit to all, even the most distant parts of that vast Body, by perpetual irradiations, the most temperate various and effectual influences, necessary for the production and preservation of innumerable species of beings If the Sun were rais'd to the

the Stars, the Earth for want of its Chan quickning heat would lofe its prolifick vertue, and remain a carcafs. The Air would be fill'd with continual oppressing vapours, the Sea would overflow the Land. If it were as low as the Moon, as dangerous effects would follow, The Air would be inflam'd byits exceffive hear, the Sea boyling, the Rivers dryed up, every Mountain a Vesuvius or Ætna; the whole Earth a barren mass of Ashes, a defert of Arabia. But in this due distance, it purifies the Air, abates the fuperfluity of Waters, temperately warms the Earth, and keeps the Elements in such degrees of power, as are requifit for the activity of mixt bodies depending on them. It cannot be in another place without the diforder and injury of universal Nature.

Besides,

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The Existence

Besides, there is a sensible proof of a wife Director in its | Motion, Some modern from whence so many and varihave argued, ous Effects proceed. The Diuris a Planet: But nal Motion from East to West causes the Day. The Sun is the whether the Earth or Sun be the center of first Spring and great Original of the World, the first Spring and great Original of the World, the firucture of it Light, and by his Presence discois not less advers the Beauties of the most of vimirable, nor the commerce of its parts less sible Objects. From hence all the regular, nor regular, nor less convincing pleasant variety of Colours, to which Light is the Soul that gives that a most wife Authour Vivacity. Without it the World fram'd it. would be the Sepulcher of it felf, nothing but Silence and Solitude, Horrour and Confusion. The Light guides our Journeys, awakens and directs our Industry, preferves mutual Conversation. And the withdrawing of the Sun from one Hemisphere to another is as beneficial to the World by caufing

For that has peculiar ad-

vantages.

Night.

vantages. Its darkness enlightens Chap. us to fee the Stars, and to understand their admirable Order, Aspects, Influences; their Conjunction, Distances, Opposition, from which proceeds their different effects in all passive Bodies. Now what can be more pleasant than the Ornaments and Diversities of these Twins of time? Besides, by this distinction of the Day and Night there is a fit succession of Labour and Rest, of the Works and Thoughts of Men; those proper to the Day, active and clear; the other to the night, whose obscurity prevents the wandring of the Mind through the Senses, and Silence favours its calm Contemplations.

And the constant revolution of Day and Night in the space of twenty four hours, is of great benefit.

nefit. If they should continue fix entire Months together, as under the Poles, though their space would be equal in the compais of the Year as now, yet with publick disadvantage. The shining of the Sun without intermission, would be very hurtful to the Earth, and to its Inhabitants. And its long absence would cause equal mischiefs by contrary qualities. For the nature of Man and other living Creatures cannot fubfift long in travail, without repairing their decays by rest. Now the fuccession of Day and Night in that space, fitly tempers their labour and repose. After the toil-

fom service of the Day, the Sun retires behind the Earth, and the Night procures a truce from business, unbends the World, and

invites to rest in its deep silence

and tranquillity. And by sleep, Chap when the animal operations ceale, the Spirits that were much confum'd in the service of the senses, are renewed, and united, in affiftance to the vital faculties; the Body is restored, and at the springing Day made fresh and active for new labour. So that the wildom of the Creator is as visible in the manner of this dispensation, as the thing it self. And 'tis an observable point of Providence in ordering the length and shortness of Days and Nights for the good of the several parts of the World. Under the Equinoctial Line the Earth being parch'd by the direct beams of the Sun, the Nights are regularly twelve hours through the Year, fresh and moist to remedy that inconvenience. On the contrary, in the Northern parts, where

where there is a fainter reflection of its Beams, the Dayes are very long, that the Sun may supply by its continuance, what is defective in its vigour, to ripen the Fruits of the Earth.

The annual course of the Sun between the North and South difcovers also the high and admirable Wisdom of God. For all the benefits that Nature receives, * depends on his unerring constant tem ejus intel-motion through the same Circle

* Obliquita-

lexisse, est re-declining and oblique, with re-rum fores a-peruisse. Plin. spect to the Poles of the World. Tis not possible that more can be done with less. From hence proceeds the difference of Climates, the inequality of Days and Nights, the variety of Seasons, the diverse mixtures of the first Qualities, the universal Instruments of natural Productions. In the Spring 'tis

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in conjunction with the Pleiades, to Chap cause sweet showers, that are as milk to nourish the new-born tender Plants, that hang at the breafts of the Earth. In the Summer 'tis joyn'd with the Dog-Star, to redouble its force, for the production of Fruits necessary to the support of living Creatures. And Winter, that in appearance is the death of Nature, yet is of admirable use for the good of the Universe. The Earth is cleansed, moistened and prepar'd, so that our hopes of the succeeding Year depends on the Frosts and Snows of Winter.

If the Sun in its diurnal and annual motion were so swift that the Year were compleated in six Months, and the Day and Night in twelve Hours, the fruits of the Earth would want a necessary space

Chap. I. Space to ripen. If on the contrary it were so slow, as double the time were spent in its return, the Harvest but once gather'd in the twenty four Months, could not suffice for the nourishment of living creatures.

Tis also a considerable effect of Providence, that the sensible World do's not suddenly pass from the highest degrees of heat to the extreamity of cold, nor from this to that, but so gradually that the passage is not only tolerable, but plealant. Immediate extreams are very dangerous to Nature. To prevent that inconvenience the Spring interposes between the Winter and Summer, by its gentle heat disposing living bodies for the excess of Summer. And Autumm of a middle quality prepares them for the rigour of Winter; that

that they may pass from one to Chap. 1. another without violent alteration.

To attribute these Revolutions, so just and uniform, to Chance, is the perfection of Folly: * For * τανεεδν δη Chance, as a cause that works with τέρε τέ out delign, has no constancy nor τόχη λέχιorder in its effects. If a Dy be Tou. Arith. thrown an hundred times, the fall is contingent, and rarely happens to be twice together on the same square. Now the Alternate returns of Day and Night are perpetual in all the Regions of the Universe. And though neither the one nor the other begin nor end their course twice together in the same Point; so that their motion appears confused; yet 'tis so just, that at the finishing of the Year they are found to have taken precifely as many paces the one as the

the other. In the amiable War Chap. 1. the other. In the other between them, though one of the two always gets, and the other loses the hours, yet in the end they retire equal. And the viciffitudes of Seasons with an inviolable tenor succeed one another. Who ever faw the various Scenes of a Theater move by hazard in those just spaces of time, as to represent Palaces, or Woods, Rocks and Seas, as the Subject of the Actors requir'd? And can the lower World four times in the circle of the Year change appearance, and alter the Seasons so conveniently to the use of Nature, and no powerful Mind direct that great Work? Frequent discoveries of an end orderly pursued, must be attributed to a judicious Agent.

The Psalmist guided not only by Inspiration but Reason,

declares

declares, The Day is thine, the Night Chap also is thine, thou madest the Summer and Winter. But this I shall have occasion to touch on afterward.

CHAP. II.

The Air a fit medium to convey the Light and influences of the Heavens to the lower World. 'Tis the repository of vapours that are drawn up by the Sun, and descend in fruitful Showers. The Winds of great benefit. The separation of the Sea from the Land the effect of great Wildom and Power. That the Earth is not an equal Globe, is both pleasant and useful. The league of the Elements considered. Excellent Wisdom visible in Plants and Fruits. The shapes of Animals are anChap. 2.

The Existence

answerable to their properties. They regularly act to preserve themselves. The Bees, Swallows, Ants directed by an excellent mind.

THe Expansion of the Air from the Etherial Heavens to the Earth, is another testimony of Divine Providence. For 'tis transparent and of a subtile Nature, and thereby a fit medium to convey Light and Celestial Influences to the lower World. It receives the first impressions of the Heavens, and infinuating without refistance, conveys them to the most distant things. By it the greatest numbers of useful objects, that cannot by immediate application to our faculties be known, are transmitted in their images and representations. All colours and figures to the Eye, founds to the

Ear. Tis necessary for the sub-Chap. 2. sistence of Animals that live by respiration. It mixes with their nourishment, cools the inward heat, and tempers its violence.

Besides, in the Air Vapors are attracted by the Sun, till they afcend to that height to which its reflection does not arrive, and there losing the foul of heat that was only borrowed, by degrees return to their native coldness, and are gathered into Clouds, which do not break in a deluge of waters that would wash away the feed, but dissolving into fruitful showers, fall in millions of drops to refresh the Earth; so that what is taken from it without loss, is restor'd with immense profit.

The Air is the field of the Winds, an invisible generation of C 3 Spirits,

Chap. 2.

Spirits whole life confifts in moti-on. These are of divers qualities and effects, for the advantage of the World. Some are turbid, others serene and chearful; some warm and refreshing, others cold and sharp; some are placid and gentle, others furious and stormy; some moist, others dry. They cleanse and purifie the Air that otherwise would corrupt by the setling of Vapours, and be destructive to the lives of Animals. They convey the Clouds for the universal benefit of the Earth: for if the Clouds had no motion but directly upwards, they must only fall on those parts from whence they ascended, to the great damage of the Earth. For moist places that send up plenty of Vapours would be overflowed; and the highest parts, to which no other

ther Waters arise, would be un-Chap. 2. fruitful. Now the Winds are assigned to all the quarters of the World, and as the Reins are slack or hard, they guide the Clouds for the advantage of the lower World.

The separation of the Sea from the Land, and containing it within just bounds, is the effect of Almighty Wisdom and Goodness. For being the lighter Element its natural situation is above it. And till separated, twas absolutely useless as to habitation or fruitfulness. Tis now the convenient seat of terrestrial Animals, and supplies their Provisions. And the Sea is sit for Navigation, whereby the most distant Regions maintain Commerce for their mutual help and comfort.

The Rivers dispers'd through C 4 the

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Chap. 2. the veins of the Earth, preserve its beauty, and make it fruitful. They are always in motion, to prevent corrupting, and to visit several parts, that the labour of cultivating may not be in vain. And that there Waters may not fail, the innumerable branches spread through the Earth, at last unite in the main body of the Sea. What they pour into it, through secret chanels they derive from it, by a natural perpetual circulation, not to be initated by Art. In this we have a clear proof of the Wisdom and Goodness of the Creator.

That the Earth is not an equal Globe, but some parts are rais'd into Hills and Mountains, others funk into deep Vallies; some are immense Plains, affects with various delight, and is useful for excelent ends: not onely for the production

duction of Minerals, of Marble Chap. and Stones requifite for Buildings, but for the thriving of several kinds of Grain and Plants that are necessary for Food or *Medicine: quidem bomifor some love the Shade, others the diorg, nature Sun; some flourish best on Rocks facies Medicinis caret, and Precipices, others in low moift facra illa paplaces; some delight in Hills, o reme rerum omnium, nusthers in Plains. Thus by the unquam non reequal surface of the Earth, is cau-media disposed a convenient temperature of nente homini, Air and Soil for its productions. fieres ipfa fo-

Add further, The Wildom of lindo. Plint the Creator is discovered by observing the League of the Elements from whence all mixt Bodies arise. Of how different qualities are Earth, Water, Air, Fire? yet all combine together without the destruction of their Enmity, that is as necessary to preserve Nature as their Friendship. Can there

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Chap.2.

be imagin'd a greater discord in the parts of the Elementary World, and a greater concord in the whole? To reduce them to such an aquilibrium that all their operations promote the same end, proves that there is a Mind of the highest Wisdom, that has an absolute Dominion over all things, and tempers them accordingly.

If we come to Plants and Flowers. Who divided their kinds, and form'd them in that beautiful order? who painted and perfum'd them? how doth the same Water dye them with various Colours, the Scarlet, the Purple, the Carnation? what causes the sweet Odours that breath from them with an insensible subtilty, and diffuse in the Air for our delight? from whence proceed their different vertues? These admirable

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ble works of Nature exceed the Chap.2. imitation and comprehension of Man. Tis clear therefore they | Est igiturid proceed from a Cause that excels quo illa confihim in Wisdom and Power. That mine melius. some Plants of excellent vertue Idantem quid are full of prickles in their stock rim quam and leaves, to protect them from Deum? Tull. Beasts that would root them up, de nat. Deor. or trample on them, an * Atheist * His muniacknowledg'd to be the effect of endo aculeis, telisque ar-Providence. The same Wisdom mando, remepreserves the Seed in the Root un-diis, ut tuta & Salva fint. der the Flower, and prepares the Ita hoc quoq; numerous Leaves of Trees, not quod in iis oonly for a shadow to refresh li-dimus, bomiving creatures, but to fecure their excogitatum Fruits from the injuries of the eft. Plin.l.22. weather. Therefore in the Spring they shoot forth always before the Fruits are form'd. And tender delicate Fruits are cover'd with broader and thicker leaves than

In Winter they cast their leaves, are naked and dry, the vital sap retiring to the root, as if careless of dying in the members to preserve life in the heart, that in the returning Spring dissues new heat and spirits, the cause of their slourishing and fruitfulness. The season of Fruits is another indication of Providence. In Summer we have the cool and moist to refresh our heats, in Autumn the durable to be preserved when the Earth produces none.

If we observe the lower rank of Animals, their kinds, shapes, properties, 'tis evident that all are the Copies of a designing Mind, the effects of a skilful Hand. Some of them are sierce, others familiar; some are servile, others free; some crafty, others simple, and all fram'd

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conveniently to their natures. How Chap. 2. incongruous were it for the Soul of a Lion to dwell in the body of a Sheep, or that of an Hare to animate the body of a Cow? It would require a Volume to describe their different shapes, and fitness to their * Atq, ut inparticular natures. Those which telligamus, niare fruitful in many births, as Swine fortuitum, & and Dogs, are furnish'd with ma-hacomnia effe ny Teats for the supply of their provide folnourishment; which * Tully ob-re, que mulserves to be the certain effect of tiplices farms provident Nature. Besides, crea-procreant, sut tures meerly lensitive are acted lo bis mammaregularly to preserve themselves rum data est and their kind, that the reason of quas eaden a superiour Agent | Thines in all paucas habent their actions. They no sooner que pauca come into the World but know | Quid of in their enemies, & either by strength bis in que non or Art secure themselves. They intelligentis are instructed to swim, to fly, to appareat? run,

Chap. 2. run, to leap. They understand their fit nourishment, and remedies proper for their diseases. Who infused into Birds the art to build * quid dicam their Nests, the * love to cherish quantus amor their Young? How are the Bees bestiarum sit their Young? in educandis instructed to frame their Honycustodiendisg; combs without † hands, and in the iis que procreaverint usque dark, and of such a figure that aad eum finem mong all other of equal compass dum possint se ipsa defende- and filling up the same space, is re? Tull-most capacious? The considera-† Quis non tion of their Art and Industry, Stupeat boc fitheir political Government and eri posse sine manibus? Providence, and other miraculous nulla intervequalities, so astonish'd some great niente doctrina banc ar-Wits, that they attributed sometem nasci. thing Divine * to them. * Quid non Divinum ha-

bent nisi quod Esse Apibus partem divinæ mentis, & Quintil. haustus

Virgil. Ætherios dixere---

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That Bees deriv'd from a Cœlestial strain,
And Heavenly race.

What moves the Swallows upon the approach of Winter to fly to a more temperate Clime, as if they understood the Celestial Signs, the Influences of the Stars, and the Changes of the Seasons? From whence comes the fore-fight of the Ants to provide in Summer for Winter? their œconomy and feryour, their discretion in affifting one another, as if knowing that every one labour'd for all, and where the benefit is common the labour must be common; their care to fortifie their Receptacles with a bank of Earth, that in great Rains it may not be overflowed, have made them the fit Em-

This is excellently described by Virgil;

Ac veluti ingentem formicæ farris Acervum,

Cum populant, Hyemis memores, teltoque reponunt,

It nigrum campis agmen, prædamque per herbas

Convectant calle angusto, pars grandia trudunt

Obnixa frumenta humeris, pars agmina cogunt,

Castigantque moras, Opere omnis semita fervet.

Thus translated by Mr. Godolphin.

So when the Winter-fearing Ants invade

Some heaps of Corn the Husbandman had made;

The

of GOD.

The fable Army marches, and with Prey

Laden return, pressing the Leafy-

Some help the weaker, and their shoulders lend;

Others the Order of the March attend,

Bring up the Troops, and punish all delay.

How could they propound such Ends, and devise Means proper to obtain them? Tis evident from their constant and regular actings, that an Understanding above Man's, who often fails in his designs, imprest their unerring instincts, and directs their motions.



while Prey HAP. HIL . TAH Do Leaf

The fable Army march

The Body of Man form'd with perfect design for Beauty and Usefulness. A short description of its parts. The fabrick of the Eye and Hand admirably discovers the Wisdom of the Maker. The erect stature of the Body sitted for the rational Soul. Man by speech is sitted for society. How the affections are discovered in the Countenance. The distinction of Persons by the face how necessary. The reasonable Soul the image of a wife and voluntary Agent.

I Will now briefly consider Man, with respect to both the parts of his compounded nature, wherein are very clear evidences of a wise Maker.

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The Body is the most artifici- Chap. 3. al of all perishing things in the World. Tis justly called the store-house of proportions. Tis equally impossible to add any thing but what is superfluous, or to take away any thing but what is necesfary. How many internal parts, diverse in their qualities and figures, are dispos'd with that providence, that all operate according to their proper Natures, and not one can be, I do not fay better, but tolerably in any other place, as well for its special as the common benefit? All are so justly ordered, with that mutual dependence as to their being and operations, that none can be without the whole, nor the whole without it. So that if with attentive Eye we consider this, it might feem that in making the Body the

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Chap. 3. design was only respecting convenience and profit: But if we turn hominis figuour thoughts from that which is ra non solum within this unparallel'd Piece, and ad usum, ve-regard the various forms and strurum etiam ad cture of the outward parts, the apra. Tull graceful order that adorns them,

we might imagin that the Maker only deligned its regular visible

Oratione verbum aliquod
dems, de Orators, observed, that if one word
elegantia debe taken from a sentence of Plato,
Lysia de senyou spoil'd the elegance, if from
tentia.

Lysias, the sense. So the taking
away the least considerable part
from the Body, spoils its comli-

Tarif. Gal. ness, or usefulness. † Two great Σορκ πνος δη. Philosophers have left excellent μια ότη μεν α. Discourses of the parts of the Eoκρας επιστρίας Discourses of the parts of the Eoκρας επιστρίας dy, justly esteemed among their μων κατασ most noble works. Galen after an καιλ. Gal. de exquisit observation of the Syme-

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try of this Fabrick, challeng'd the Cha Epicureans, to find but one of all the numerous parts that compole ir, the least Vein or Fibre, that was not serviceable for its proper end, or might be better if chang'd in its form, temperature or place, and he would embrace their opinion, that Chance was the Authour of it. In particular he makes an inquiry whether the Heart that does the office of the Sun in that little World, could be plac'd better than in the middle of the Brest, and evidently proves it could not, with respect to the uses of the several Faculties, that from it, as the first Fountain, derive necessary supplies for their exercise. For this reason he says, that by describing the use of the parts, he compos'd a true Hymn in praise of the wife Maker.

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Chap. 3.

What knowledg is requific to describe all that is wonderful in it? the contempering the differing humours in just weight and meafure, the inviolable correspondence establisht between all the parts for the performance of natural, vital, and animal operations? To touch upon a few things. The Stomach that by an unknown virtue prepares the nourishment, the Heart and Liver, the two Seas of blood; the one more gross, the other more refin'd and spirituous; the Veins and Arteries their infeparable companions, that diffuse themselves into innumerable rivolets, and convey the blood and spirits of Life; the Nerves, the secret channels, that from the Brain derive the spirits of sense and motion; the Muscles that give it various motions; the fleshy parts of

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different substance and quality ac Chap. cording to their various Offices the Membrans in that diversity, formefiner, forme thicker weavid according to the quality of the part they cover; the inward Fat that preferves the warm Bowels from drying up; the Marrow wherewith the instruments of motion are oiled and made nimble and expedite; the Bones that support the building of fuch different forms, proportions, qualities, and fo fitly joyn'd: these are a full conviction that a Divine Mind contriv'd it, a Divine Hand made and fashion'd it.

I will more particularly confider the curious fabrick of the Eye and Hand. The Eye is a work of such incomparable Artifice, that who ever understands it, hath a sufficient proof of His Skill that D 4 form'd

Chapail?



form'd it. This is most evident by dissecting it, and representing the parts separate one from another, and after reuniting them, and thereby discovering the Causes of the whole Composure, and of the Offices proper to every

part.

That that may be understood without seeing it, is, that there is no member in the whole Body compos'd of more parts, nor more different, nor ordered with more exact wisdom between themselves in one frame. Their situation is fo regular and necessary, that if any of them be never so little displac't, the Eye is no more an Eye. It includes three Humours that are transparent, and of different thickness, the one resembling Water, the other Glass, the other Chrystal, and from them borrow their names:

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france, the less or greater thickness, the figure that is peculiar to each of them, would render the Eye altogether useless for seeing: for the refractions of the light that enters through the Pupil would be disordered and the rays not be united in a point, to paint in the Retina, the images of visible objects, which is the last disposition from whence the act of feeing follows. Several Tunicles involve it, one of which is perforated (as much as the little Circle in the middle that is called the Pupil) to give open passage to the images flowing from their objects. The Muscles by their agency raise or cast down, turn or fix it. The Nerves fasten'd to the Brain, convey a supply of spirits for the fight, and transmit the representation

our confusion to the internal sen-

If we consider the Hand by the most exact rule of proportion, his evident that its libstance and Thape are most conducive to beauty and service. If the Fingers were not divided, and separately moveable, but joyn'd together with one continued skin, how uncomely, how unufeful would it be? Of an hundred effects ninery would be loft. All that require variety of motion, fubrilty of art, or strength, could not be perform'd. But the Fingers being disjoyned, tis fit to do whatever the mind defigns, or necessity requires. It works intirely, or in parts; it brandishes a Sword, or manages a Pen; strikes on the Anvil with a Hammer, or uses a delicate File; rows in the Water,

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Water, or touches a Lute. Tis fit Chap. 1. for all things, adapting it felf to the greatest and least : all which advantages the * Philosopher ex- * Eù 3 mepreffes with admirable brevity, In ungaverdan divisione manus componendi facultat i to esos.

est, in Compositione dividendi non effet. To xespòs Suppose the Fingers were of e Alougeth ? qual length and bigness, great in the work work conveniences would follow. And in 70 Six in this the Divine Wildom is emi- petu Evas. nent, that what at first sight seems avau, in T8to be of no consequence, yet is ab to jeneiro, folutely necessary, not only for all an even. the regular, but for most works de part Aniof the Hand. If the Fingers were mal. cap. 10. extended to the same measure, it were able to do nothing but what the four longest can. And how uncomely would fuch a figur'd Hand appear? when that beauty is lost, that springs from variety in things alike. Belides, how unprofitable

Chap. 3.

fitable a part were the Hand if the Fingers had within one intire bone, not flexible to grasp as occasion requires? Or if a fleshy substance only, how weak and unapt
for service? what strength or
sirmness for labour? even the
Nails are not superfluous; besides
their gracefulness, they give force
and sense to the points of the Fingers. If one be lost, the feeling in
that extream part is very much
lessen'd, that is so necessary for the
discerning of things,

To these I shall add two other

To these I shall add two other considerations that discover perfect wisdom in the framing the

humane Body on ob o side stove

1. Its structure is very different from that of Brutes, whereby 'tis a fit instrument of the rational Soul. The Brutes being meerly terrestrial Animals, are perpetual-

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ly groveling and poring down-Chap. wards, feeking no more than their food. They have no commerce with the Heavens, but so far as it serves them for the Earth, as being only born for their Bellies. in Man the posture of his Body interprets that of his Soul. | The | Quid ergo stature is streight and rais'd, ex-plenius Arpressive of his dominion over the Mundum ho-Creatures made for his use. Head is over all the less noble cansa, Denm parts, and the Eyes so plac'd that fecife quam the Mind may look out at those bus animanwindows to discover the World tibus folus, in its various parts, to contemplate ita formatus the Heavens its native Seat, and ejus ad calum be instructed and excited to ad-directi, facies mire and love the Divine Maker.

gumentum & The minis, & bominem sui quod ex omniad Deum fe-Clans fit? Ut videatur bo-

minem Deus quasi porrecta manu allevatum ex bumo ad contemplationem sui excitaffe. Lactant.

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2. If we consider Man complexly as joyn'd with society, to which he is naturally inclin'd, he is so form'd as to give or receive assistance for his preservation and comfort. The Tongue his peculiar glory, the interpreter of the Thoughts, and reconciler of the Affections, maintains this happy Besides, the Face commerce. makes known our inward motions to others. Love, Hatred, Defire, dislike, Joy, Grief, Confidence, Dispair, Courage, Cowardice, Admiration, Contempt, Pride, Modefty, Cruelty, Compassion, and all the rest of the Affections are discover'd by their proper Aspects. By a sudden change of the Countenance are manifested the deepest Sorrow, the highest Joy. As the face of the Heavens vail'd with Clouds, by the breaking forth of the

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the Sun is presently clear'd up. Chap. And (which is above the imitation of Art) different affections are represented in a more or less expressive appearance according to their stronger or remisser degrees. Timanthes the famous Painter, wifely drew a vail over Agamennons Face, present at the sacrifice of his innocent Daughter; dispairing to express and accord his leveral Passions, the tenderness of a Father, with the Majesty of a King, and the generosity of the Leader of an Army. This way of discovery has a more universal use than words. The ministry of the Tongue is only useful to those that understand our Language, but the Face, though filent, speaks to the Eye. The Countenance is a Crystal wherein the thoughts and affections, otherwise invisible, appear,

Chap. 3. appear, and is a natural fight known to all. For this manner of expression is not by the common agreement of Men as Signs absolutely free or mixt, but from the institution of Nature, that always chuses what is most proper to its end, being guided by a superiour Director according to the rules of perfect Wisdom.

Moreover, the innumerable different characters in the Faces of Men to discern every one, is the counsel of most wise Providence, for the universal benefit of the World. For take away this distinction, and all the bands of Laws, of Commerce, of Friendship are dissolved. If we could not by singular inseparable lineaments distinguish the innocent from the guilty, a Brother from a Stranger, the worthy from the unworthy, all

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all truth in Judgments, fincerity Chap. in Relations, distinction of Merits, fecurity in Trade would be deftroyed. In short, humane societies cannot be preserved without union and distinction; the one prevents division, the other confuflon. Union is maintain'd by speech and other figns of the inward dispositions of the Heart; distinction is caus'd by the variety of countenances. And 'tis considerable that so few parts compofing it, and in so small a compass, mirabile diand always in the same situation, yet there is such a diversity of Figures as of Faces in the World. * Seneca propounds this as a spe-Etacle worthy of admiration, the nusquam in the Stoical pride, falsely esteem'd idem recidit; greatness of mind, would scarce milia videnadmire Miracles.

propter que vini Artificis ingenium est. boc quoq; existimo, quod in tanta copia rerum. etiam que situr, cum contuleris diver-

And as the frame of Mans Bo fa fint.

dy, so much more the rational Soul, his eminent prerogative above all sensible beings, discovers the Deity. The Superior faculties, the Understanding and Will, whereby he makes a judgment and choice of things in order to his happinels, declare it to be the living Image and Glory of a most Wile and voluntary Agent. The admirable composition of two things fo disproportion'd, a spiritual and material substance in the humane nature, is an argument of his omnipotent skill, who united them in a manner inconceiveable to us. But the Nature, Qualities, and Operations of the Soul, shall be more distinctly considered afterwards. And by this short account of some parts of the World, we may sufficiently discover the perfections of the Maker. We must

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must pluck out our Eyes, and ex- Chap stinguish common sense, not to fee infinite Wifdom, Power and Goodness shining in them, the proper marks of the Deity.

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CHAP. IV.

The vanity of Epicurus's Opinion of the Worlds original discover'd, from the visible order in all the parts of it. Chance produces no regular effects. The constant natural course of things in the World proves that 'tis not framed nor conducted by uncertain Chance. The World was not caused by the necessity of nature: In the search of Causes the mind cannot rest till it comes to the first. Second Causes are sustain'd and directed



ed in all their workings by the first.

The Creator, though invisible in his

Essence, is visible in his Effects.

Before I proceed to the other Head of Arguments, I will briefly show the vanity of those Opinions that attribute the production of the World to Chance, or to the sole necessity of Nature.

Twas the extravagant fancy of Democritus, and Epicurus after him, that the original of the World was from the fortuitous encountring of Atoms, that were in perpetual motion in an immense space, till at last a sufficient number met in such a conjunction as form'd it in this order. Tis strange to amazement, how so wilde an Opinion, never to be reconciled with Reason, could find entertainment. Yet he left a numerous School, many

followers tenacious of his Do-Chap. 4. Atrine, the heirs of his Frenzy. Tis very easie to shew the vanity of this conceit, that supposes all, and

proves nothing.

That these particles of matter should thus meet together, 'tis necessary they move: now from rum Natura whence is the principle of their duo sint quemotion, from an internal form, or renda, unum an external Agent? If they will fit ex qua be ingenuous and speak true, they queq; res effimust answer thus, from whence rum que vis foever they have it, they have it : sit que quidq; for if they did not move, their O-efficiat, de materia difpinion cannot proceed a step fur- serverunt Ether. But supposing their motion picurei, vin to be natural, what powerful sicientem reli-Cause made them rest? how are querunt. Tul. they so firmly united? have they de fin. lib.1. Hooks that fasten, or Birdlime or Pitch or any glutinous matter, that by touching they cleave so fast together?

gether: They must grant something like this, otherwise they cannot unite and compound, and then the Epicurean opinion is presently dissipated. Supposing them triangular, circular, square, or of any other regular or irregular figure, yet they can make no other compound then a mass of Sand, in which the feveral grains touch without firm union. So that 'tis very evident whether we suppose Motion or Rest to be originally in the nature of matter, there must be apowerful Efficient to cause the contrary. Besides, by what art

Si senfu catam disposite poffint, quia non potest quicquam rationale perfi-Lactant.

rent nee coire did so many meet and no more, and of fuch a figure and no other, and in that | just order as to form the World, a work so exact that cere nifi ratio. by the most exquisite skill it cannot be made better. Add further; how could these minute Bodies

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without sense, by motion produce Chap. 4.

it? this is to affert that a Cause may act above the degree of its

power.

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Can we then rationally conceive that a confused rout of Atoms of divers natures, and some so distant from others, should meet in such a fortunate manner, as to form an intire World, so vast in the bigness, so distinct in the order, so united in the great diversities of natures, so regular in the variety of changes, so beautiful in the whole composure, though it were granted, that they did move, and that one of their possible conjunctions in some part of Eterniry were that we see at present? Could such a strict confederacy of the parts of the Universe result from an accidental agreement of contrary principles? Tis so evident

Chap. 4.

dent by the universal experience of Men, that regular Effects are caused by the skill of a designing Agent, that works for an end, that upon the light of any fuch effects, there is not the least shadow of a fuspicion in the mind, that it proceeded from blind and counfelless Chance. If we should hear one make a plea for a Cause, with fuch powerful Reasons and Eloquence as are most proper to convince and perswade his Judges to decide it for him, can we doubt whether he understands what he speaks, or casually moves the organs of speech? And yet if he did move them by Chance, one of the casual motions equally possible with any other, would be that he perform'd at prefent. If a thoutand brass Wheels were thrown on a heap, would fix or eight meet

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to fitly, as by their conjunction Chap. 4. diftinguish the hours? or, is a skilful Hand requisite to joyn them, and direct their motion ? And did the Planets, those vast bodies, by Chance ascend to the upper part of the World, and joyn in that order, as to measure the time exactly for so many past ages? Who ever faw a dead Statue form'd in the veins of Marble, or a well proportion'd Palace, with all Rooms of convenience and state, arise out of a Quarry of Stones without a Sculptor to fashion the one, and an Architect to frame the other? yet Marble and Stones are more dispos'd to make a Statue, or a Building, that are the materials of them, and only require skill and workmanship to give them form, than Atoms mixt together are to make

& babuiffe fertur, non arte, sed spondiscurrentibus maculis. que singulis Sua redderentur Insignia.

make the World Indeed * Pliny faintly tells a story of a fabulous * Fama eft, Ring of Pyrrbus, in which an Agar was fet distinctly representing not by Art, but pure hazard, Apollo te nature, ita with his Harp in the midst of the nine Mules. The first Reporter ut Musis quo- was defective, that he did not oblige us to believe, that the found of his Harp was heard in confort with the Muses. It would have been a wonderous fine Miracle, and the belief as easie that a Stone might be a Musician, as a Painter.

Now if the effects of Art are not without an Artificer, can the immense Fabrick of the World be other than the work of a most perfeet Understanding ? Who fixt the Foundations of the Earth? who laid the beautiful Pavement we tread on? who divided & adorn'd the Chambers of the Spheres? who

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open'd the Windows to the light Chap in the East? who encompals'd it with the immense Vault of the starry Heaven hanging in the Air, and supporting it self? Could Artless Chance build it? No Man, unless totally deserted of Reason, can possibly have such a fancy. Let Realon judg how could the World be otherwise than 'tis, supposing it fram'd by a designing Cause? all things are dispos'd divinely, that is, by Perfect Wisdom, as publick necessity and ornament require. What the Psalmist observes concerning the Heavens, is equally true of all the other parts of Nature, Their line is gone out, to signifie the exactness of their proportion. If this be the effect of Chance, what is the product of Design? Can Reason distinguish between things artificial, wherein the felicity of In-

Chap. 4. Invention appears, and things rude not done by rules in the works of the Hands, and can it not discover the manifest prints of Wisdom in || Si est ali- the order of the Universe? | How

quid in rerum much more Skill is evident in the bominis mens, frame of the World that in all the quod ratio, effects of humane Art, so much the potestas bumana efficere non possit, est illud certe ficit bomine melius. Id

less folly would it be to attribute tius dixerim qua Deum.

the most curious works of Art, than the production of the World quod illudef- to Chance. Add further; The establisht orante quid po- der of the parts of the World is an argument that excludes all doubt, that 'tis govern'd and was at first fram'd by unerring Wisdom. For, if they were united by Chance, would they continue in the fame manner one day? Is it not most likely that one of the innumerable possible combinations should suc-

ceed, different from the same te-

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nor of things that is but one? ef-Chap. pecially if we consider that the parts of the World are never at rest: The Heavens, the Elements, mixt bodies are in perpetual motion. If Chance rul'd, is it within the confines of probability, that the Sun that runs ten or twelve thousand Leagues every day, should be now in the same part of the Heavens, where it was in former years in fuch a day, when there are so many other places wherein by Chance it might wander? Would the Starrs keep a perpetual course regularly in such appearing irregularities?

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Quam ratio, & certis quod legibus om-

nia parent;

Nusquam turba nocet, nihil illis partibus errat. Manil. lib. 1 Astrom.

Or would the fowing of Seed in Chap. 4. Or would the love produce fuch a determinate fort of Grain? for the other possible mixtures are so vaffly numerous, that it would be ten thousand to one but some other thing should spring up than what does. According to his Hypothelis, it would be greater folly to believe that the natural course of things should be the same this Year as in former times, than to affert that a Gamelter should to day throw the Dice in the same order, and with the fame points uppermost as he did yesterday. Tis evident therefore, that the Epicurean Doctrine having not the least shadow of Reason, had never been receiv'd with applaule but as 'tis joyn'd with impiety.

2. Some attribute the rife and course of things in the World to the

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the fole necessity of Nature and Chart this it may be replied or some of the state of the state

no to Tistrue, there is an evident connexion of Causes and Effects in the Celestial and Elementary World, whereby times and seasons are continued, and the succession of mutable things is preferv'd, so that Nature always confurning, remains intire Though all vegerative and sensitive Beings dye, yet the Species are immortal. For the Living are brought forth to fucceed in the place of the Dead. But the inquiring Mind cannot reft here: for 'tis impossible to conceive a train of effects, one cansed by another, without ascending to the first Efficient that is not an Effect. For nothing can act before it exists. The order of Causes requires that we ascend to the Supream, which derives Being and Vertue

Chap.4.

The Existence

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p. 4. vertue to all the intermediate. Thus
Nature produces things from fe minal Causes, that depend on things already in being. The Seed of Flowers and Trees suppose the Fruits of the Earth before growing, but the first Tree could not be so produc'd. To fancy an infinite fuccession of Causes depending one upon another, without arriving to a first, can only fall in to the thoughts of a disordered mind: How camethis Horse, that Librain Nature ? Fis by generation from another, and that from another, and so infinitely. How came this Man into the World? 'Tis because he was begotten by fuch a Father, and he by another, and so infinitely. Thus Atheism that rejects one truly Infinite Cause, is obliged to admit an Infinity in all things, an Incomprehenrus ſe.

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hensibility in all things. Tis there-Chap. 4. fore evident the efficient principles in Nature are from the sole power of the first and independent Cause. They could not proceed from themselves; and that a most wife and powerful Being is the original of all things is as evident. it conceivable that the insensible Mass that is called Matter, should have had an Eternal Being without original? whereas there is not the least imaginable repugnance in the Attributes of the first and highest Being, in whom all those Perfections concur, which as proper to the Deity, are form'd in the mind in the idea of it, as his Spiritual Nature, Eternity, Immensity, Wisdom, Omnipotence, &c. of which 'tis equally true, that no one either absolutely or relatively confidered, involves a contra-

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tradiction, that make it impossible; for the Supream Being to possess it; Is it not perfectly inconsistent to attribute to Matter the lowest, and most contemptible of all Beings, the highest and most noble Perfection, an Independent Existence? One may affert it in words, but not seriously without the utter deferting of Reason. Man incomparably excels this Matter, he understands it, and that understands not him, yet he has a derived Being in time. therefore necessary that that should have some cause of its Being. But supposing the self subsistence of Matter from Eternity; could the World, full of innumerable Forms, spring by an Impetus from a dead formless Principle? Tis equally impossible that a blind Cause cafual, or fatal, should give Being and

and Order to the Universe.

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Besides, all subordinate Causes Chap. 4. are sustained in their Beings and Powers by fresh influences from the first, and directed in their operations. To attribute the manifold Effects in the World to Second Caufes working in a blind manner, without an Universal Intellectual Mover, that disposes, tempers, and governs them, is as unreasonable, as to attribute humane Works to the common Instruments of Art, without the direction of the Understanding that uses them. The Hand or Pencil has not skill to do any thing, but as it obeys the Mind, that gives it the impression of Art, and regulates its Motion. The Earth knows not the various Fruits that spring from it, nor the Sea its living Productions. And the Sun, though a F 2 more

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Chap. 4.

more specious, is not a more intelligent and artificial Agent. Nature under another name is the ordinary Power of God, that by its intimate concourse with Second Causes produces and supports things. And 'tis one of the considerable Wonders of his Providence, that the stream of perishing things, always emptying, is always full; there being a supply from the Fountains of continual Productions, of what is lost in the dead Sea: so that the World is always the same, and always new.

And from what hath been argued, we may judge how unreafonable it is to doubt whether there be a Principle in Nature of excellent Wisdome, because not seen in his own Essence: for if Reason compel us to acknowledg that n-

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that the works of Art wrought by Chap. 4. manual Instruments, proceed from an unfeen minde that directed their motions according to the idea fram'd in it felf, we ought more strongly to conclude there is a Divine Mind though invisible to mortal eyes, that contriv'd at first, autor, &A and with knowledg performs all είναι φήσοthe works of Nature. Το deny λάξομλω εthe Existence of a Being not sub- wi The out jected to our outward Senses, is THTA THIS equally of no force in both the zexvàs ngíinstances. By the same Reason St. Gal.de Opi-Austin confounds the Atheist ob-fice hominis jecting that he could not fee the Deity. To whom he propounds this question, That since his Body was only visible, and not his Soul, *Unde scio why should it not be buried? And quia vivis; upon the reply, That the * quick-cujus animam Unde scio? Respondebis, quia loquor, quia ambulo, quia operor. Stulte, en operibus corporis agnoscis viventem, ex operibus crea-

ture non agnoscis Creatorem?

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Chap. 4. ning presence of the Soul was evi-dent in the actions of Life perform'd by the Body; he truly infers, if a vital Principle imperceptible in it felf is discover'd by vital actions, the Deity, though by the perfection of his Nature undifcernable to our Senses, is clearly feen by the light of his effects. And those who are wilfully blind, if God should by any new fensible effects make a discovery of him felf, yet would remain inconvin cible; For the arguments of his presence from extraordinary effects, are liable to the same exceptions pretended against the ordi

nary, and and and model are side ing the proofs of the Deity from the frame of things in the World, and the ordinary course of natural Caufes, I shall add further, that er.

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in every age fuch events have be- Chap. 4 fallen Men. with that congruity to their actions, that natural reafon has clearly argued from hence, that an Immortal Providence obforves them, and rewards them, accordingly. Indeed fometimes there is a promiseuous dispensing of temporal Good and Evil Things for most wife Reasons: partly to convince Men that the Recompences of Moral Actions are not distributed by the just God here, but referved for the next life: and partly that the foundation of true Vertue might not be taken away; for that consists in preferring the honest Good before the Pleasant or Profitable in this World; fo that there could not be a perfect choice of it, if the cerain expectation of a present tem-

poral benefit were the motive to

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hap. 4. allure Men to its practice: But usually 'tis otherwise. Common Experience verifies, that Estates unjustly got, either waste away infenfibly, as a Body by the fecret force of flow Poylon, or speedily are scattered by the luxury of the next Heir, whereas what is obtained by honest industry, has a bleffing convey'd along with it. And sometimes the Divine Providence is so visible in retributions here, that impiety it self cannot over look it. As when good Men are fignally preserved from imminent dangers, and become successful in worthy designs beyond all humane expectations. Or in punishing the Wicked: As, 1. when there is such an exact Correspondence between the evils one has done, and the evils he fuffers, that the Signatures and prints prints of the Crimes are apparent Chap. 4. in the Sufferings. Per que quis peccat, per hac torquetur. The Complices of the Sin, are the Executioners of the Punishment.

od 2. When there is fuch a concurrence of Circumstances in a Judgment, either as to the Time and Place, or the Instruments. that tis not possible for the Considering Mind to reckon it among Cafual things, or to attribute it meerly to fecond Caufes, to the Rage of Enemies, but must rife higher, and acknowledg that the blow was reach'd from a just and fure Hand, that disposed of all Accidents, and of the Counsels and Resolutions of Men for the accomplishment of his Righteous Will. Or, 3. when Persons in the highest Dignity, who have abused their Power by Cruelties to others,

The Existence

are milerably cut off. Even Heathens adored a Power above, that has more Sovereign Authority of ver the greatest Monarchs, than they have over the meanest slaves. Many pregnant Examples may be alledged; I will instance in a few: Thus Admibezed instructed by his punishment concerning his fins, gave glory to God Threefcore Green Kings, having their thumbs and their great coes cut off, gathered their meat under my Table : as I bave done, fo Gud hath rewarded me. It astonish'd one of the wifest and most ver! tuous of the Romans, that Pompley should perish in the defence of the juster Cause, and Cesar prosper in his violent Usurpation, but of the had lived a while longer, and feen the Militarper killed in the Senatehouse that Pompey had dedicated

to the Common-wealth, where

† Cato: Res Divinæ habent multum Calignis.

|| Plut. Life
of Julius Ce-

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Cefar then exercised his Tyranny, Ch and that dying he fell at the feer of Pompey's Starue, all stained with his blood, the darkness had been dispelled, and Providence clear'd ap to his light, A Herad for af- *Josephus. fenting to the impious flattery of the People who deified him, was immediately fruck with a flame full Difeste, and epulumed by wretched Vermine, as the just put nishment of his Pride ni & Pope dine. Alexander the fixth, was poissise with that Wine he had prepared for the murdering some rich Cardinals. * Henry the third of France *Mezeray. was cut off by a stroke as dreadful as unexpected, on that day of the Month, and in that Chamber where he was President of the Council that contriv'd the bloody Massacre of the Protestants. Tho that abhorr'd Fact was done by the

Chap. 4. the malicious fury of a Monk, yet the Circumstances argue the process of Divine Justice, that by the Time and Place, the perpetual Witnesses of Actions, gave evidence of his Crimfon guilt against him. In short, though extraordinary Calamities may befal Men for Causes indiscernable to us, yet often there is fuch a perspicuous demonstration of a holy just Pro-vidence in them, that all are compelled to confess there is a God that judges the Earth.

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CHAP. V.

The beginning of the World proved from the uninterrupted tradition of it through all ages. The invention of Arts, and bringing them to perfection, an argument of the Worlds beginning. The weakness of that fancy that the World is in a perpetual Circulation from Infancy to Youth, and to full Age, and a decrepit state and back again, so that Arts are lost and recovered in that change. The consent of Nations a clear Argument that there is a God. The impressions of Nature are infallible. That the most Men are practical Atheists; that some doubt and deny God in words, is of no force to disprove his Existence. There are no absolute Atheists. Nature in extremities



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tremities has an irresistible force, and compels the most obdurate to acknowledg the Detty.

Shall now come to the fecond head of Arguments for the existence of the Deity, drawn from the proofs of the Worlds beginning; from whence it follows that an eternal intellectual Cause gave it being according to his pleasure. For it implies an exquifite contradiction that any thing should begin to exist by its own power. What ever is temporal, was made by a Superior Eternal Power, that drew it from pure nothing. And the other consequence is as strong, that the Cause is an intellectual Being that produc'd it according to his Will. For supposing a Cause to be intirely the same, and not to produce an effect

effect that afterwards it produces, without any preceding change, 'tis evident that it operates not by necessity of Nature, but voluntarily, and therefore with understanding: As a Man who speaks, that before was silent, according to the liberty of his will.

Now of the Worlds beginning there is a general tradition derived down through the uninterupted course of so many Ages to us. 'Tis true, the Philosophers renewed the confusion of Tongues, that disunited the Builders of Babel, in their account of the Architecture of the World; Yet they generally agreed 'twas made by a most wife Agent. And this Doctrine is fo agreeable to Reason, that you may as soon bridle the current of Nilus, and make it return to its Fountain, as suspend the perswasion of it in the

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back as false. Now what account can be given of this uncontroulable Opinion? Tis most rational to conceive that it came from the first Man, (instructed by his Creatour) when the Tradition was easy, the World not being numerous.

Add to this, the rudeness of former Ages, and the simplicity of living becoming the new-made World. This account the most antient Histories give of the rise of Common-wealths, that the first Nations were a confused Chaos, till the Soul of society was infused to regulate them. But that which I shall particularly insist on as a convincing proof, is this; The invention of many Arts beneficial to Men, and the bringing them to perfection by degrees. If the World

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were without begining, it would Chap. have had no age of childhood and ignorance, but being always old, and instructed by infinite study and experience, it would have always known what it fuccessively learnt in the School of the last three thousand years, fince the memorials of profane Histories are transmitted to us. Some that afferted the Eternity of the World, were sensible of the force of this Argument, and made a pittiful shift to evade it. They fancied, that though the World had no beginning, yet as Animals proceed by different ages, till they arrive at extream and impotent old age; in like manner it happen'd to the Earth, not in all its parts at once: for then in that vast succession of Ages, the World and race of Men had been spent; but sometimes in one

Chap. 5. one part, and after in another. But with this difference, that whereas Man after decrepit age never renews his youth, a Country once wasted with age, returns by vertue of the Celestial influences to its former vigor, and is in a perpetual circulation to new Infancy, new Youth, and so to old Age. And from hence it is, that it learns again those things that were well known in former ages, the remembrance of which was intirely loft. But the vanity of this fiction is easily discover'd.

number of years, of which Memorials remain before and fince this Fiction, that in no part of the World should be seen or heard of this decrepit age and new childhood, which according to this opinion

nion hath innumerable times hap-Chap. 5. ned in the circle of Eternity, some-Chap. 5. times in one, sometimes in another Province? If we fancy Nature were so changeable according to the revolution of the Heavens, we may with equal Reason believe, that by various conjunctions of the Stars, it hath and may fall out, that Water should burn, and Fire cool; that Serpents should be innocent, and Lambs pernicious; that Flys should live an age, and Eagles but a day.

2. Since 'tis affirmed that the whole World doth not fink into this Oblivion at once, it must follow that in some vigorous parts the knowledge of Arts still remain'd, and from thence should be derived to other parts (that were ascending from their ignorance) as 'tis usual in the com-

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Chap. 5.

merce of distant Regions. So that it will never fall out that Arts and Sciences once invented fhould be totally loft. Tis true, some particular Nation, not by change of Nature, but humane accidents, may lose the Arts wherein it formerly flourish'd; as is eminently visible in the Greek, that is now far more ignorant and unpolisht than in former ages. But this cannot with any pretence of Reason be faid of the whole World. 'Tis evident therefore if the World were Eternal, it had always been most wife and civil, and that its gradual attaining the knowledg of things of publick advantage is a fufficient conviction of its beginning in time, by the Counsel and Will of an Intellectual Agent. Lovins

the loud voice of all Nations ac-

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cords in confirming this Truth Chap. 5. The Civil, the Barbarous, the Fixt, the Vagabond, the Free, the Enflayed, though divided into so many Empires, and Kingdoms, and Provinces, and many so distant that not the least commerce passes between them, though so contrary in a thousand fashions and customs that depend on the liberty of Men that is murable, yet | all consent | Omnes duce in the acknowledgment of a God, natura eo vebeing instructed by Nature that is os effe dicaalways the same, and immutable. mur. Cie. Tis as natural to the humane un-lib. de nat. derstanding by considering the Arist. lib.r. frame of the World, to believe de Coel. there is a God, as 'tis the property de Leg. of the Eye to see the light. Aristotle Plut. cont. supposes that if some persons Colet in fin. from their birth were confin'd to dwellings under the Earth, and afterwards should ascend into these

habitable

habitable parts, that upon the first fight of the Heavens and Earth, with their visible Ornaments, of the regular and establish d'course of Nature they would conclude that they were the Works of God. The affent to this truth is unforc'd, but, without offering extream violence to the rational faculties, none ean contradict it. Indeed in their * conceptions of him, few have the glass of the mind fo clear and even as to represent him aright. Some divide what is indivisible, and of one make many Gods, Some attribute corporeal parts to a pure Spirit; some figure him in Statues to make the invisible seen; and in other manner deform him. Yet no errour, no ignorance has absolutely defac'd the notion of him. And that no societies of Men are without the belief of a first Being,

* Quales fint varium eft. este, nemo negat. Cicer.

ing, superiour to all things in the Chap. World, and of absolute Power over them, and consequently worthy of Supream Honour from all reasonable Creatures, their Prayers, Vows, Sacrifices, Solemnities, Oaths, are a vifible Testimony. From hence it is that Conscience acquits or condemns, shines or burns, refreshes or torments according to the innocence or guilt of Mens actions, with respect to the Divine Judgment-seat. This is a Witnels none can reproach, a Judg none can decline, an Executioner none can resist. Though the guilty person may be secure from humane Justice by force or concealment, yet he feels secret palpitations, is in perplexity and confusion from the fears of a superiour Justice to which he is accountable. Nay sometimes an inraged

Chap. 5. ragedConscience constrains an offender to reveal his crimes, though a death full of mifery and shame be inevitable upon the discovery. The reflections of an accusing mind, cause such terrours as no powers of Men can inflict or remove. These were exprest by the Poets under the representation of angry Furies, not to be corrupted by any follicitations, that with flaming brands, and whips of Scorpions eagerly pursue the guilty, and make them restless even in the midst of outward prosperities.

* Fletcher Christs victor.

* As when wild Pentheus, grown mad with fear,

Whole troops of hellish Haggs about him spys,

Two bloody Suns stalking the dusky Sphere,

And twofold Thebes runs rowling in his Eyes; Or

Or through the Scene staring 0-Chap. with eyes flung back upon his

Mothers Ghost,

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That with infernal Spirits all emboft,

And Torches quench't in blood doth her stern Son accost.

a primordio. But on the contrary, the testimony of Conscience when clear and Quisquamne innocent produces that Tranquil- of bominum lity, Complacence and Joy, that qui non cum istius princino outward troubles can extin-pii notione diem prime guish.

The weight of this Argument is great: for that which is com-cui non fit ingenitum, non mon to the whole species, and perimpressum. petual from its first being through non insitum, all its duration, is the * Impressiesse Regem & Dominum. on of Nature, which in its Uni-ceterorumque versal Principles either of the quacunqifunt Understanding, or the Will, is moderatorem?

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never + deceived. Thus the inclination to that good that is con-†Que eft enim venient to our faculties; the apgens, quod genus bomi- proving as most just to do to anonum, quod ther what we defire in the same non babent ficircumstances should be done to ne doctrina us, are natural Principles, whose anticip ationem quandam rectitude and verity are so evident, Deorum ? De that no Man is so contumacious quo autem omniñ natuas to require a proof of them. If ra consentit, id verum esse we discredit its authority in this necesse eft. fingle instance, that there is a Tul. lib. de God, we may with equal reason nat. Deor. suspect its testimony in all other things; that the persons we converse with are phantomes, that the objects that strike our Senses are only shadows, that what appears white is black, that what is felt as cold is hot, that what is evident to all Mens minds is false, viz, that the whole is greater than a part. In short, the most rational Discourses would

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would have as little firmnels and Ch certainty, as the incoherent fancies of one that is diffracted, or dreams. We must renounce Sense and Reason, having no affurance of fuch things as are clear and manifest, but the instinct of Nature that determines our affent. Now what account can be given of the fense of the Deity indelibly * Stamp'd on the minds of Men? * Que enim From whence is it that of all their nobis natura thoughts, none is more evident Deorum ipsothan that of an eternal Being fove-rum dedit, earaign in all perfections? And as sit in menti-tis impossible to conceive a Cir-bus ut eos acle without roundness, or a Body ternos & beawithout Extension, or a Man mus. Tull. without Reafon, fo tis not possible to conceive a God but under the notion of a Being absolutely Perfect, and therefore Eternal, and Independent in his Existence,

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which is the first of all Perfections. If there be no God, from whence comes it that Nature has imprest fuch a strong belief of a Being not only false but impossible? For if there be no God, 'tis impossible there should be. There is no middle between the two Attributes of Being, necessary and contingent. And that an Eternal Being should now begin to exist, is a palpable contradiction, move must therefore conclude that the Author of the Humane Soul has fo fram'dit, that by the free ule of its faculties it necessarily comes to the knowledge of its Original, From hence 'tis universal and constant. And can there be a testimony of equal Authority, clearness and sincerity as this of Nature, understood in every Language, and receiv'd in every place; and where

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where it is most simple, it is most Chap. 5. the same, and therefore more convincing.

To elude the force of this Argument there are several weak e-vasions.

Aical Atheists, and live without God in the World. To this I answer:

Works, is of no validity to disprove the natural notion of him; for by this confession we must cancel almost all the Law of Nature. How many notoriously rebel against the infallible principles of common Reason? How many dishonour their Parents? Yet there is no Precept more clearly natural, and acknowledged by the rudest Nations, than the obligation to the immediate Authors of our lives.

The Existence

How many by fraud or rapine enrich their Estates, or violate the honour of the Marriage-Bed, and do that to others they would not have done to themselves? But though they contradict the Law of Nature in their actions, can they abolish it in their hearts? can they make Conscience dumb, that it shall never reproach their impieties, because they are deaf to its voice? Tis as impossible as to transform themselves into another kind of being, and become Brutes in nature, because they resemble them in their dispositions and pra-

2. Tis said by the Patrons of impiety, that the disquiets of Conscience are impressions from without, caused by education, or vain fears that arise from the dark temper of the body, or the weakness

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of the mind, or from low igno- Chap. 5. rance of the * natural causes of fuch things as aftonish Men: as *Magnis do-Ecliples were formerly and still ceo de rebus, are terrible to some Nations, that ligionum anilook on them as presages of great mum nodis Calamities from angry Heaven. exfolvere per But the folly of these pretences Lucret.1.4.

will appear if we consider, 1. That falle principles instilled by Parents and Masters in our education, the strongly believed, while the Reverence of our instructers hinders a free inquiry, yet, when Reason is disintangled, it gets a clear victory over them: But the terrors of the guilty Conscience cannot be entirely overcome: from whence tis evident that the notion of a God has a foundation in humane Nature.

2. These fears are not the effects of Melancholly, for they

exfolvere per-

Chap. 5.

5. often surprise Sinners of a brisk Sanguine temper, who try all the ways of mirth and jollity to bribe or stifle Conscience, but in vain. The sense of guilt imbitters their purest Wines, a secret horrour is discordant with their chearful Musick; the wounded mind bleeds inward though they sear it never so much.

3. This trouble does not spring from a weak scrupulous mind; for the most inlightened and strongest spirits when under the conviction of guilt, cannot dispute themselves out of misery; nay according to the degrees of their knowledge, are the degrees of their sorrow.

4. Thunder and Lightning are terrible to those who understand the natural causes of them as well as to the ignorant; there being in every

every Man a tacit apprehension of Chap them as the prepared instruments of Vengeance in Gods hands, who has set up a Tribunal in Conscience, and pronounces a fecret Sentence there. In short, Conscience is an immortal power inseparable from Man, and thoughts Accusing or Excusing are inseparable from the remembrance of his Acti-'Tis evident therefore that God is the Authour of Conscience, and as he has not left himfelf without an external Witness in the Works of Creation and Providence, so not without an inward Witness in the Breast of Man, that can never be totally filenc'd.

3. Tis objected, that there are speculative Atheists who deny the Existence of a God. To this I

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1. Supposing that some are A-H theists Chan s

theists in opinion, it dothnot fol-low that the belief of the Deity is not a pure Universal Principle of Nature. For by all Men, we must understand those in whom the sense of Nature is not perverted. Things of the cleatest certainty have been denied by some. We feel Motion, yet a Philosopher disputed against it. The Argument is convincing that Snow is white. because it appears so to all Mens Eyes; tho to the Eye that wants its native fincerity, and infected with a vicious tincture, it appears of another colour. Now 'tis certain that Atheism is not produced by generation from the patural discourses of the Mind, but from the putrefaction and rottennels of Manners. Those who have lost their Reason in Sensuality, and Submit their understandings to the guidance

guidance of their corrupt Affecti- Chap. ons, that is the feeing faculty to the blind, are most inclin'd to Atheism. And they can never come to that impious height without obliterating in the guiltiest manner, the lively characters of Reason and Humility. Such are as prodigiously irregular from the true constitution and perfection of the minds of Men in respect of belief, | 'Eligite's as a | Bird without wings would vovto ev 72 be from the natural composure of \(\xi\text{\psi}\text{\psi} \pi\text{\psi}\text{\psi} the Bodies of all others, in respect is Tpeis aleof parts. Monsters cannot dishonour, and are no pattern of the sis yive, species. And shall the contradi- ENTE unuéction of a few brib'd by their luft,

3. There is no absolute Atheist as GSS ane. i. e. of fuch a firm perswasson that eos, is ogvis there is no God, as excludes all Max. Tyr.

mony of mankind?

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Chap. 5.

doubts and fears of the contrarys 'Tis true, as a pretext for their licentiousness, and to give boldness to their fearful impiety, some obdurate wretches may desperately deny the Supream Eternal Power, to whom they are accountable; But no violence can intirely choke this natural notion and belief of the Deity, it has such deep and strong root in the Humane Spirit. The vital spark will fly in their Faces, notwithstanding all their endeavours to tread it out. As the Principle of Life appears not in a fwooning fit, yet 'tis only retir'd from the outward parts and still remains in the Body; so this principle though not sensible for atime, yet is not extinguisht in the Soul. Sharp afflictions will awaken the apprehensions of a God in the most stupified Consciences, and infpire and mah

inspire them with new life and Chap. motion, and make them breath out humble supplications, for mercy and help, to the Deity whom they denied before. Of this we have numerous instances: I will produce some that were signal. One is recorded by Æschilus. That the Persian Messenger in his Narrative to the King, of the overthrow of his Army by the Grecians, related that those Gallants who before the Fight in the midst of their Cups and bravery denied God and Providence as secure of Victory, yet afterwards when furiously pursu'd by their enemies, they came to the River Strymon, that was frozen and began to thaw, then upon their knees they mournfully implor'd the favor of God, that the Ice might hold and give them safe passage over from

||Tunc adeo fracti cum corpore funt firitus illi feroces, ut qui ratus antea nibil minus regium quam Sacris dedere animum, remagnis parvisa; superstitionibus obnoxius degeret, religionibusque populum impleret. Liv. lib. I.

the pursuers. Nature in extremities has irrefiftable workings, and the inbred notions of the Deity, though long supprest by imperious lusts, will then rise up in Mens Souls. Tullus Hostilius is another example, who disdain'd to express submission to God by acts of worship, as a thing unbecoming his Royal state, but when his stubborn fierce mind was broak in his diseased body, he used all the serpente omnibus vile Rites of Superstition, and commanded the people to joyn with him, thinking by his flattering devotions to appeale the incenfed Deity. Bion the Philosopher, was a declared Atheift, till struck with a mortal Disease, and then, as a false Witness on the Rack, confest the truth, and addrest himself by Prayers and Vows to God for his recovery. Egregious folly, as the

the | Historian observes, to think that God would be brib'd with his gifts, and was or was not according to his fancy. And thus it hap-vos mos to pens to many like him. As a Lamp beiov Evou. near expiring shines more clearly, so Conscience that burn'd dimly for a time, gives a dying blaze, and discovers him who is alone able to fave or to destroy. But how just were it to deal with them as *He- * Sext. Emrofilus with Diodorus Cronus, a pir. I. 1. wrangler that vext the Philosophers, by urging a captious Argument, against the possibility of Motion. For thus he argued: A Stone, or what ever elfe, in moving it self, is either where it is, or where it is not; if where it is, it moves not; if where it is not, then it will be in any place, but where it is. While this disputing humour continued, one day he fell, and rollon' displact H4

Laert, in Bion.

displac't his Shoulder. And sends Chap. 5. dilplac t his shoulder. I de lent in haste for Herofilus, of excellent skill in Surgery. But he desirous first to cure his Brain, and then his Shoulder, told him that his Art was needless in that case: for according to your own opinion, this Bone in the diflocation either was where it was, or where it was not, and to affert either, makes the displacing of it equally impossible. Therefore 'twas in vain to reduce it to the place from whence it was never parted. And thus he kept him roaring out with pain and rage till he declar'd himself convinc'd of the vanity of his irrefutable Argument. Now if, according to the impiety of Atheists, there is no God, why do they invoke him in their Advertities? If there be, why do they deny him in their prosperity? there can no other Reafon

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Reason be assign'd but this, that Chap. 6 in the state of health their minds are disperst, and clouded with blind folly, in sickness they are serious and recover the judgment of Nature. As 'tis ordinary with distracted persons, that in the approaches of Death their Reason returns: because the Brain distemper'd by an excess of heat, when the Spirits are wasted at the last, is reduced to a convenient Temper.

CHAP. VI.

The Belief of the Deity no Politick Invention. The afferting that 'tis necessary to preserve States in order, is a strong proof of its truth. No History intimates when this belief was introduc'd into the World. The continuance of it, argues that its rise

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was not from a Civil decree. Princes themselves are under the fear's of the Deity. The multitude of false Gods does not prejudice the natural notion of one true God. Idolatry was not universal. The worship of the - only true God is preserved where Idolatry is abolish'd. To make the

II. 'T'Is objected, that the be-L lief of the Deity was at first introduc'd by the special invention of some in power to preferve the civil State; and that Religion is only a politick curb to restrain the wild exorbitance and disorders of the multitude. This admits of an easie resutation.

1. Those corrupted minds that from pride or sensuality presum'd to exempt Men from the Tribunal of Heaven, yet affirm'd that a City might rather be preserved

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without Fire and Water, the most Chap.6. necessary Elements, than without the religious belief of a God E. gregious lovers of mankind! and therefore worthy of esteem and credit, fince they divulge that Do-Etrine, that if believed, the World must fall into dreadful confusion by their own acknowledgment. But fuch is the Divine force of Truth, that its * enemies are confrain'd to give Testimony to it. curam rerum For is it conceiveable that an Er-bumanarum ror not in a light question, but in vita est: Pethe Supreme Object of the Mind, nasque alishould be the root of all the Ver- nunquam irtues that support the Civil State, ritas effe. and Truth if discovered should have a fatal consequence on Government, fubvert all Societies, and expose them to the greatest dangers? How can they reconcile this with their declared Principle, that

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that the natural end of Man is the Chap. 6. that the natural end of Man is the knowledge of Truth? It were less strange that the constant feeding on deadly Poyson, should be requisit to preserve the natural Life in health and vigour, and that the most proper food should be pernicious to it. So that the objection if rightly consider'd will confirm the Religious belief of a Deity. Indeed 'tis evident that all Civil Powers suppose the notion of a God to be an inseparable property of humane Nature, and thereby make their Authority facred in the esteem of the People, as derived from the Universal Monarch. Thus they make use of that natural love that is in Men to their own Persons, their Lives, Liberties, and Children, as a powerful constraint to Obedience. Is this affection then so natural and universal

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versal, the effect of Policy? none Chap. 6. were ever so vain as to pretend so. And certainly the belief of a God is as natural to a Man, as the love to himself and his nearest relations.

2. They can give no account of what they so boldly Affert. What Historian ever recorded, that in fuch an Age, such a Prince introduc'd the belief of a Deity to make obedience to his Laws to be a point of Religion. Tis true, Politicians have sometimes used artifice and deceit to accomplish their Ends. Lycurgus pretended the direction of Apollo, and Numa of the Nymph Egeria, to recommend their Laws to the People. Scipio and Sertorius made some other God to be of their Council of Warr, to encourage their Souldiers in dangerous Enterprises. But this franc

6 this mask only deceived the igno-The more intelligent diff cern d'the finels of their politick contrivance.

3. Is it conceiveable that the belief of the Deity, if its original were from a civil decree, should remain in force so long in the World? Falle opinions in Philo-Tophy, adorn'd with great elequence by the inventors, and zeafoully defended for a time by their followers, though opposit to no Mans profit of pleafure, yet have tofttheir credit by further inquiries. And if the notion of a God were * lophisticate Gold, though

4 Non tam stabilis opinio permaneret, nec confirmaretur diuturnitate tempocum seculi etatibus boiffet. Cic.

could it have endured the Touchris, nec una- stone, and the Fire, for fo many ages without discovery? Could it minumy, in have past the test of so many veterare potu- fearthing Wits, that never had a

authorized with the Royal stamp,

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sharein Government? can we rationally suppose that in such a succession of time no discontented person, when the yoke of Government was uneafie, should disclose the Arts of Affrightment, and releafe the People from imaginary Terrors, that with courage they might resume their liberty? Tis a true observation, No single perlon can deceive all, nor be deceived by all. Now if there be no God, one person has deceived all by introducing the general belief of a God into the World, and every one is deceived by all, believing fo from the Universal Authority of Gods that were ador brishall

4. The greatest Princes are under the awful impressions of the Deity. Those rais'd to the highest Thrones are not free from inward anxieties, when the guilty Consci--0111

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ap. 6. ence cites them before his dread. ful Tribunal. Of this we have their unfeigned Declarations in the times of their diffress. Now tis unconceivable they would voluntarily perplex themselves with a fancy of their own creating, and dread that as a real Being, which they knew to be feigned. This pretence therefore cannot without an open defiance of Reason be aled by aff wow if there be nbagbal

3.d Tis objected that the confent of mankind in the acknowledgment of a God is no full conviction of his existence, because then we must believe the false Gods that were adored in the the greatest Princes blow

1. The multitude of Idols created by superstitions fancies, is a strong presumption that there is a true God. For all Falshood is Sup-Some

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supported by some Truth, Deceit Chap. 6. is made credible by refemblance. The Heathen worship though directed amiss, yet proves that a religious inclination is found in its original, and has a real object to which it tends; otherwise Idolatry, the corruption of it, had not found such a facility and disposition in Men to receive it.

2. Idolatry hath not been universal in all Ages and Nations: The first causes of it and motives that preserved it are evident. The Nation of the Jews was freed from this general Contagion: for we may as rationally argue from their own Histories concerning their belief and practice, as from the Histories of other Nations. And when a vail of darkness was cast over the Heathen World, some were inlight'ned by true Reafon to

Chap. 6. to see the folly of the superstiti-ous Vulgar that stood in awe of their own Imaginations. The Philosophers privately condemn'd what in a guilty compliance with the Laws of State they publickly own'd. Nay even the lowest and dullest among the Gentiles generally acknowledged one Supreme God and Lord of all inferior Deities. As Tertullian observes, in their great distresses, guided by the internal instructions of Nature, they invok'd God, not the Gods to their Help.

3. That the belief of one God is a pure emanation from the light of Nature is evident, in that fince the extinction of Idolatry, not a spark remaining in many parts of the World, 'tis still preserv'd in its vigor and lustre in the breasts of Men. Since the plurality of

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Gods have been degraded of their Chap. 6. Honour, and their Worships chafed out of many Countries, and the ideas of various ancient Superstitious are lost, the only true God is served with more solemn veneration. Time, the wise discerner of Truth from Falshood, abolishes the sictions of Fancy, but confirms the uncorrupted sentiments of Nature.

Thus it appears, that the most specious Objections produc'd (by these who would fain be Atheists) to enervate and destroy the belief of the Deity, are so miserably weak, that they rather strengthen it. Tis that which one very pertinently said to some that were arguing against God and Religion, If you proceed to discourse in this unreasonable manner, in truth you will convert me from Atheism.

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For what more just cause of Aversion and Horror can there be in a Person, in whom Judgment and Honesty are not perfectly extinguished, then to find himself in the same Opinion with such wretched extravagant Oreatures?

To conclude this Discourse; what rational doubt can remain after so strong a witness of the Deity External from the Universe, Internal from the frame of the humane Soul? If we look through the whole compais of natural Beings, there is not one feparately taken, but has some Signature of Wildom upon it. As a beam of Light passing through a chink in a Wall of what figure soever, always forms a Circle on the place where 'tis reflected, and by that describes the image of its original, the Sun. Thus God in every one

of his Works reprefents himself Chap. tanquam Solis radio scriptum. But the union of all the parts by such strong and sweet bands, is a more pregnant proof of his omnipotent Mind. Is it a testimony of great military skill in a General to range an Army compos'd of divers Na- 'OTEP EV VIII tions that have great antipathies w Segvitus, between them, in that Order as do nymuov, renders it victorious in Battel ? 78 TO EV MOG-And is it not a testimony of infi- Arist. de nite Providence toldispose all the Mund. Hosts of Heaven and Earth so as they joyn successfully for the preservation of Nature? 'Tis astonishing that any should be of such a reprobate mind, as not to be convinc'd by the fight of the World, a visible Word that more gloriously illustrates the perfections of the Creator, than the sublimest Eloquence, that conceals

Sapientiæ in ætate jam ut Severitateret.

Chap. 6. what it designs to represent. When Sophocles was accused by his Tantum enim ungrateful Sons, that his Understanding being declin'd with his fracia dedit, Age, he was unfit to manage the it Severita-iem Tribuna- affairs of his Family; he made no lis in Theatri other defence before the Judges, favorem ver- but recited part of a Tragedy Hier. Epist. newly compos'd by him, and left

ad Nepot. it to their decision, whether there was a failure in his Intellectuals: upon which he was not only absolved, but crown'd with Praises.

What foul ingratitude are those guilty of, who deny the Divine Wildom, of which there are fuch clear and powerful demonstrations in the things that are seen? Abhorr'd impiety! worthy of the most fiery indignation; and not to be expiated with a fingle death. None except base stupid spirits that are laps'd and funk below the r-

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the rational Nature, (as a noble Chap. 6. * Philosopher justly censures * Aucov is them) are capable of fuch prodigious folly and perverinels. Yet avaides yethese are the pretenders to free reafon and strength of mind, and δφθαλμοίς. with a contemptuous smile despife the sober World, as fetterd with servile Principles, and foolishly soften'd by impressions of an unknown, uncertain Being, and value themselves as more knowing than all others, because they contradict All. Ridiculous vanity! as if a blind Man in a crowd some. times justling one, sometimes another, should with impatience cry out, Do ye not see? when he is under a double blindness, both in his Eyes and Understanding, not seeing himself, and reproaching those that see, for not seeing. In short, this great Truth shines with so bright

119 νος, πεπλα-VHLEVOV TOIS Max. Tyr. crar. prim. quid fit Deus.

bright an Evidence, that all the fons of darkness can never put out, and can only be denied by obstinate Atheism and Absurdity,

CHAP. VII.

The duties of understanding Creatures, to the Maker of all things. Admiration of his Glorious Perfections visible in them. This is more particularly the duty of Man, the World being made eminently for him. The Causes why the Creator is not honour'd in his Works, are Mens ignorance and inobservance. Things New rather affect us than Great. An humble fear is a necessary respect from the Creature, to the Divine Majesty and Power. Love and Obedience in the highest degrees are Due from Men to God, in the quality

quality of Creator. Trust and re-Chap. 7. liance on God is our duty and privi-

Let us now briefly consider the indispensible Duties of rational Creatures with respect to the Maker of all things. And those

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the Deity, and his perfections that are so visible in his Works. For there must be a first Cause from whom that receives Being, that cannot proceed from it self. In all the forms of things there are some Characters stampt of the Divine Wisdom, that declare his Glory, some sootsteps imprest of his Power that discover him, some lines drawn of his Goodness that demonstrate him. And so much praise is justly due to the Artificer,

Chap. 7. as there is excellence of Art and Perfection of workmanship appearing in the Work. This Duty is especially incumbent on Man, because the World was made with a more eminent respect for him, than for Angels or Animals. For if we consider the diversity of its parts, the multitude and variety of sensitive Natures, of which it confifts, and the Art whereby 'tis fram'd according to the most noble Idea and design of highest Wisdom, 'tis evident it was principally made for Man, there being an adequate correspondence between them, with regard to his faculties and the objects. Tis true the Angels understand more perfectly than Man the Union Order and Beauty of the World, an incomparable proof of the Makers Perfections, but they are not capable

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of knowledg or pleasure by tasts, Chapa fmels, founds, which are only proportion'd to make impressions on material Organs. And is it agreeable to Wildom that an Object purely sensible should be chiefly intended for a Power purely Spiritual? Neither are the Beafts fit spectators of the Divine Works. For the material part to which sense can only reach, is the least notable in the frame of Nature, and the occonomy of the World. They cannot discover the dependance between Causes and Effects, the Means and End, nor the Wisdom that ordered all. These are only for the vision of the Mind, which they want. The volume of the World to them is like a fair printed Book compos'd of fublime matter and style, but opened to one that fees the beauty

Chap. 7.

of the Characters, without under-Itanding the Language it speaks, and the Wisdom it contains. An Eagle by fixing its eyes on the Sun cannot measure its greatness, nor understand the ends of its motion. The World would be loft, if only for them. But the wife Creator united these two distinct natures in Man, and plac'd him in this Theater of his Magnificence, that by the ministry of the fenses he might have perception of the external part, and by his Reafon discover what is most worthy to be known; the admirable order that diftinguishes and unites so many and such different natures, and guides all their motions, that 'tis clear they depend upon one principle without knowing it, and conspire to one end without willing it. How should this raise his mind

Chap. 7

mind in the just praises of the Ma-Chap.

The true causes why the Creator is not duly acknowledged and honour'd for his Works, are either Ignorance, or a guilty neglect and inobservance of them.

1. Ignorance in the composure of the World, and of the leveral beings in it. A Philosopher askt by one what advantage the in-Aructions of Philosophy would be to his Son? replied, If no other, yet that when he is a spectator in the Theatre, one Stone shall not fit upon another. An ignorant person encompast with all the varieties of Nature, wherein omniscient skill appears, is insensible as a Stone carv'd into the shape of a Man. Nay the most learned Profesfors know little more than the feveral kinds of things, and the causes

Chap.7.

causes and manner of some particular Effects: How often are they forc't to take refuge in occult qualities when prest with difficulties? or only affign Universal causes of things, and sometimes the fame for operations extreamly contrary? How many mysteries of Nature are still vail'd and hid in those deep recesses where we can go only in the dark? How much remains undiscover'd that is truely wonderful in the Works of God? They are the Objects of the Eye and Mind, but what is visible to the Eye is least worthy of admiration. From hence the value of the Works, and the Glory of the Author is much lesfen'd Besides, the rational pleafure of the mind is lost by not discerning the wife order that is infallibly observ'd in universal Nature.

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Tis not the viewing a musical Chap.7. Instrument, the variety of the parts, and of the strings in their fize and length, that produces delight, but hearing the harmonious and pleasant diversity of their founds contemper'd by the proportion of Numbers. Thus 'tis not the fight of the meer outward frame of things, but the understanding the Intellectual Musick, that springs from the just Laws of Nature, whereby they are perfectly tuned, and the conspiring harmony of so many mixt parts with-out the least harsh discord, that ravishes the Soul with true pleafure.

2. The inobservance of Man is another cause why the great Creator is not magnified for all his Works. If we did confider the least, even one of those | unius ||Tertullian. puncti

Confuetudine escunt animi, neg; admiranrunt rationes earum rerum quas femper novitas magis quam magnitudo rerum debeat ad exfas excitare.

nat. Deor. medicina à ruputatur, cum pauperrimus tex quæratur, nulla artium vilior fiet. Flin.lib.24.

Chap. 7. puncti animalia, a Flea or Mite, we should find what is admirable in quotidiana, & that scarce-visible Atom of mat-Confuetudine oculorumaffu. ter. But the * novelty; not the excellence of things, draws our tur, negsrequi- thoughts. The greatest works in Nature that are not Miracles, onquas temper vident. Quasi ly because common and usual, are past by with a careles Eye. Their continual presence is not moving, quirendas cau- but lessens our regard and attenti-Cicer. c. 2. de on The + Naturalist obsery dit tarabia atgs to be one of the Colemn follies of Indiamedendo Men, to value Medicines nor for teriusq; parvo their Virtue, but the Country bro mari im- where they grow, the Climate remedia vera from whence they come; if they quifque canet, have a Barbarous name, they are nam fi ex hor-to petatur aut reputed to have a mysterious estiherba, aut fru-cacy, and those Plants are neglected as unprofitable, that are natives of their own Soil. The rarity is esteem'd more than the merit

rit of things. 'Tis a greater won-Chap. der to give light to the Sun, than to restore it to the blind, yet its daily presence does not affect us. If a Chymist should extract a Liquor of fuch an extraordinary virtue, that by pouring a few drops of it on the dust, a Body should be form'd, animated, & move, would any one be induc'd to believe it without the testimony of his own eyes, and would it not be a furprising wonder? Yet innumerable living Creatures spring from the Dust by the falling of Rain, and few think it worthy of Observation. The raising a dead Body to life would aftonish us, but we are unaffected that every day so many living Men are born. Yet, if we confider things aright, the fecret forming a Body in the Womb is an equal Prodigy of Power

Power, and as truly marvellous, as the restoring the vital Congruities to a carcals, that prepare it for the reception of the Soul. What more deserves serious Reflection, than that from the lame indistinct Seed, so many and such various parts in their substance, figure and qualities should proceed? hard and dry for the Bones, liquid for the Humours, moist and fost for the Flesh, tenacious for the Nerves, perforated for the Arteries and Veins, hot for the Liver and Heart, cold for the Brain, transparent for the Eyes? How should it raise our wonder that that Matter which in it self is simple and e-Magni artifi- qual, in Gods hand is capable of fuch admirable Art? But the constant fight of living productions causes our neglect, and deprives him of his just Honour. Thus, that

cis elt claufif-Se totum in exiguo. Sence

that from almost an invisible Seed Chap. weak and tender, should spring a great Tree of that strength as to Nature mirelift the fury of the Winds, what parvo gigni miraculous virtue is requisit ? The arbores. Plin. inlightned observing Mind afcends from Nature to God, whose instrument it is, and with deliberate admiration praises Him for his excellent Works.

2. The most humble fear is a necessary Duty from Man to the Majesty and Power of the Creator. A barren admiration of his omnipotent Art in his Works is not sufficient, but it must be joyned with awful respects of his Excellent Greatness. He has the Right, and to him is due the Reverence and Homage of Univerfal King. With what folemnity and composedness of Spiritshould we approach the Divine Presence? K 2 What

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What a jealous watch ought to be Chap. 7. plac'd over our Hearts in all our addresses to Him, left by carelesnels and inadvertency we should disparage his Excellencies? To think of Him without Reverence is a profanation. The Lord is a great God, and a great King above all Gods; and from hence the necessary consequence is, O come let us wor ship and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker. What ever is Glorious, is in Him in the most excellent degrees of Perfection. The World, with the innumerable variety of Greatures, is but a drop compar'd to his Transcendent Greatness: And what part is Man of that drop? as nothing. Time is but a point of his Eternity, Dominion but a shadow of his Soveraighty. Tis the most natural duty of Man to walk bumbly with his God, and to fear

fear above all things to displease Char Him. The whole Creation, even the insensible part, and that feems least Subject to a Rule and Law, and least conducted by Reason, obey his Will . What is more volatile and rash than the Winds? yet they do not breath but by his Command. What is more fierce and impetuous than the Sea ? yet it does not transgress his Order. When it threatens to over-run the whole Earth, the weak Sand Stops its foming rage, and it retires, respecting the bounds set by the Creator. What then will be our guilt, if we are regardless of his Majesty and Authority, who are enlightned with Reason to understand his Will, when the most rebellious and unteachable things in Nature readily and constantly obey Him? He is present everywhere, STULES

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where, the whole compass of Heaven and Earth is but an Inch of his Immensity; He sees all, observes all, is more intimate with our Heartsthan we are our felves; and dare Men trample on his Laws before his Face? Who can by refistance or flight escape from punishment, that offends Him? He can bind the most stubborn enemies hands and feet; and cast them into utter darkness. As he made all things by the meer act of his Will, so without the least strain of his Power he can destroy them? What does not a mortal Man arrogate to appear terrible, and make his Will to be obeyed, when he has but power to take away this short natural life. The proud King of Babylon commanded the numerous Nations under his Empire, to proftrate themselves like Brutes

Brutes in the lowest adoration of Chap. the Image he let up; and when the three Hebrew young Men refused to give Divine Honour to it, he threatned, If ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery Furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands? This is the language of a Man (poor Dust!) that can heat a Fornace with Fire, and has a Squadron of Souldiers ready upon the least intimation of his pleasure to throw into it any that disobey'd, as if no Power either in Heaven or Earth could rescue them from him. 'Twas impious folly in him thus to speak: But God can give order to Death to feize on the stoutest Rebel, and cast him into an Eternal Fornace, and fay in truth, Who shall deliver out of my hands? His Power reaches K 4

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Carnulius me evasit. Suet.

ches beyond the Grave. Tiberius intending to put to death by flow and exquisit torments one who kill'd himself, cry'd out in a rage, Carnulius has made an escape from me. But no Sinner can by dying elcape God's Justice, for Death it self takes the Condemned, and delivers them to endless Torments. There are no degrees of fear can be equal to this cause the Wrath of the great Creator. Is there any pleasure of. fin so sweet, but this, if considered, would make it to be as Poison or Gall to the taste? Is any Joy so predominant but this would instantly make it die in the carnal heart? The due apprehension of Almighty Anger is sufficient to subdue the most vicious insuperable Passions that so violently transport to fin. But O Astonishing fupidity! The most of Men with-

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out fear provoke the living God, Chas if he were like the Idols of the Heathens, a dead stock or stone, insensible and powerless, so that the Spiders made their Webs on the Beard of Jupiter, and the Birds their Nests in his Thunder. Where is their Reason, where is their self-Love, to challenge so dreadful an Adversary, who is able in the very act of Sin to strike them with Death Temporal and Eternal. Consider this ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there is none to deliver.

3. Love and Obedience in the highest degree are due to the Author of our Beings, and all things for our use and profit. What motion is more according to the Laws of Nature, than that Love should answer Love? and so far as the one descends in benefits, the other

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7. other should ascend in thankful-ness? If we consider the first and fundamental benefit with all its circumstances, in the pure order of Nature; that we are Men confifting of a rational Soul, and a Body admirably prepar'd for its convenient habitation, and in this regard the most wonderful work of God; can a humane Breast be so hard and flinty as not to be foftned and made receptive of impressions by this effect of his Goodness? Is it possible that any one should be of such a stupid savage temper, so void of all humanity, nay of the fentiments of the lower Nature, as not to be toucht with a grateful affection to the Author of his life, when Lions and Tigers, the most untractable Beafts of the Forest, are by an innate principle so tenderly inclin'd

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totheir Dams? It unspeakably en- Chap forces our obligation, that beside the inherent excellencies of Nature he made us by priviledg above all Creatures in this sensible World, and furnish'd it with innumerable objects excellent in their beauty and variety, that are not meer remedies for necessity, but for the delight of this present life. And having tafted the good of being, and the fruits of his magnificent Bounty, can we be coldly affected to our great Benefactor? The | Moralist advises, as the best wis illum expedient to make a person grateful, encompass him with thy benefits, that wherever he turns, something may recal his fugitive giens ibi te memory, and render thee visible to him. This cannot be done by Men. But where ever we turn our thoughts, or fix our eyes, either

|| Beneficiis cinge, quocunq; se convertit, memoriam tui fu-

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on our persons or comforts, lon the present state or the future, (for he has given Eternity to our duration) we find our felves incircled with innumerable and inestimable benefits from God. 'Tis impossible we should ever forget them without the greatest Guilt. Every minute he renews our lives and all our enjoyments. For the actual influence of his Power is as requifit to preferve our being, as at first to produce it. The Creature has nothing of its own, but a simple non-repugnance of coming in to act. How frozen is that Heart that is not melted in love to fo good a God? Let us look into the depth of our native Nothing, that we may understand the heighth of the Divine Love, in raising us from the pure possibility of being into act, and that meerly for

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for his Sovereign pleasure, and Chap. 7. most free benignity. There was no necessity that constrain'd him to decree the making the World, or Man in it: for 'tis a plain contradiction that there should be a Superior Power to determine a Being of infinite Perfections. And for that Reason also he gives all his Benefits without the least posfible advantage to himself. Twas commended as a miraculous Verwe in Theodofius the Emperor, that A te nova behe was bountiful, meerly to fatisfie his own Goodness: But 'tis the tuis habitus propriety of God's Nature. Is eft, qui totus He not then worthy of all our quibus defe-Thoughts, all our Affections, for rebatur, nihis most free and admirable Fa- bilque ad te wours? If there be but a spark of nisi dandi vo-Reason, we must judge that the luptur. immenfe Liberality of God to us, without respect to his own inte-

nignitate is esset illorum

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rest, is so far from lessening, that it increases our duty to correspond in all possible thankfulness.

Consider further, that which adds to the greatness of the Gifts

gratiora funt. quantoque in partem interiorem animi descendunt. cum delectat cogitantem magis a quo. quam quid acceperis. Senec. de benefic lib.1.

Illa quanto we receive, is the greatness of the Giver. The price of a benefit rifes in proportion to the worth of the person that bestows it. A small gift from a great hand may be justly preferr'd before a richer from a less estimable Donor. Now if we confider that the glorious God (in comparison of whom the greatest Kings are but vain shadows of Majesty) has made a World full of somany and so excellent Creatures for our refresh. ment, that our being on Earth may not be tedious in the short space of our journy to Heaven, will it not overcome us with an excels of wonder and affection?

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and cause us to break forth, What Chap.7 is Manthat thou art mindful of him, and the Son of Man that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the Angels, and hast crown'd him with Glory and Honour; I hou madest him to have dominion over the Works of thy hands, thou hast put all things under his feet.

And as our most ardent Love, so intire Obedience as the inseparable effect of it, is due to the Creator, both in active service for his Glory, and an absolute resignation to his Will. The strongest title to acquire Dominion according to the Law of Nature, is that of the Cause to the Effect. The Mind cannot rebel against the light of this Principle. Tis most just therefore we should imploy all our Powers, even from the early rise of Reason to the setting point of Life,

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Life, wholly in his service from whom we received them. 'Tis an excellent representation of St. Sieut dedit | Austin; If a Sculptor, after his

figuram, cor raculum viverb. Dom.

daret, & fi- fashioning a piece of Marble in a humane Figure, could inspire it te. Serm. de with Life and Sense, and give it Motion, and Understanding, and Speech, can it be imagin'd but the first act of it would be to prostrate it self at the feet of the Maker, in fublection and thankfulness; and to offer what ever it is, and can do, as homage to him? The Almighty Hand of God form'd our Bodies, He breathed into us the Spirit of Life; and should not the power of Love constrain us to live wholly according to his Will? methinks nothing should be pleafing to us but as we make it tributary to Him. If we only regard Him as our Creator, that one quality

quality should for ever engage us Chap. to Fidelity in his Service, Zeal for his Interest, Obedience to his Laws, and an inviolable respect for his Honour. And this Duty binds us the more strongly, because as God made the World for Mans profit, so he made Man for his own Glory. And what the Loadstone is to the Steel, or the sensible good to the appetite, the same attractive is the end to the intelligent Nature. And the higher the end is, and the more the mind is fitted to understand its excellence, the more powerful it should excite the faculties, in pursuit of it according to their uttermost capacity. Now what horrid unthankfulness is it to be insensible of the infinite Debt we owe to God? what disloyalty to pervert his Favours, to flight his Commands, a miled

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and cross the end of our Creation? The serious consideration that God has given us such a noble Nature, capable to know, love. serve and enjoy Him, and that we have so little improved our faculties for these excellent ends, should put us in two contrary excesses of Spirit, the one of joy, for his unspeakable Goodness, the other of confusion, for our most unworthy neglect of it. Our Duty and our Dilobedience have the same meafure. The Goodness and Bounty of our great Benefactor regulates the one and the other. The more we have received from Him, the more we are ingaged to Him, and the more we are ingaged, the more guilty, and worthy of punishment will our neglect be. Among Men an ungrateful perfidious person is an object of horror; and favours abused

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abused become motives of hatred. Chap. To employ our Faculies rational or sensitive to the differvice of our Maker, is the same kind of Villany though of incomparably greater guilt both in respect of the object and degree; as if a Traitor should turn the very same Weapons against his Prince, that he received from him for his defence. turn his benefits into occasions of fin, and by the same things to dishonour Him by which we should glorifie Him, is extreme perverf-In this, unthankful Man imitates the Earth from whence he was taken: for that makes use of the heat of the Sun to fend up Vapours that obscure the Beams of Light he communicates to it. This is to despise the Divine Majesty, Power, Wisdom, Goodness, that are united, and so eminently appear

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appear in his Works, and will provoke his severe Vengeance. Let us therefore every day revive the sense of our obligations, and by intense thoughts kindle the affections of Love and Reverence, of praise and thankfulness, that in them, as slames ascending from an Altar, we may offer our selves a boly living Sacrifice, which is our reasonable service. Our All is due to him, what ever we are, what ever we have, our Bodies, our Souls, our Time and Eternity.

And an humble refignation to his Will in all things is the effential duty of his Creatures. Tis true that upon the account of his Wildom and Power, it becomes us with the most respectful submission to yeild our selves to his pleasure. Authority and Dignity naturally result from their union in a person

Therefore tis Supreme Cha in him who possesses them in their greatest excellence. When God himself speaks to Job of his tranfcendent Majesty, and of his right to dispose of Men according to his Will; he produces his Works as the conspicuous testimonies of his great Power and exquisite Wisdom: But the reason of our submission will be more convincing if we remember that God has an absolute unalienable propriety in us, and all that we enjoy; for our being and comforts are the liberal gifts of his hand. If therefore he shall please to take away any of his Favors, even Life it self, though not to exchange it for a life infinitely better, it would be the most unnatural Rebellion to resist the dispositions of his Providence, the most vile unthankfulness,

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ness, to be stormy and passionate, or to consent to any secret murmuring and discontent in the Heart, as if our own were taken from us, either unleasonably or unjustly. And though our troubles immediately proceed from fecond natural Causes, yet according to right Reason, we must esteem them but as instruments of his invisible Hand, and govern'd by his Counsel, in order to such effects, and in the time he pleases. It is our duty even in the saddest circumstances, with an entire readiness of mind, and conformity of defires, to say to our Maker, Thy Will be done.

4. Trust and Reliance on God is our duty and priviledge. Every being has a necessary dependance on Him for its subsistence; but Man of all the visible Creatures is only

only capable of affiance in Him, Chap. by reflecting upon his own Impotence, and by considering the Perfections of the Creator, that render him the proper object of trust. Tis the incommunicable honour of the Deity, to be acknowledged and regarded as the Supporter of all things. To put confidence in our selves, in the advantages of Body or Mind or Estate, as if we were the Architects of our own felicity, is a facrilegious usurpation. Yet vain Man foments a fecret pride and high opinion of himself, as if by his own prudence and conduct he might acquire an happiness, till experience confutes his pleasing but pernicious error. The truth is, were there no God, whose powerful Providence go-

verns all things, and has a special care and respect of Man, he were

hap. 7. of all Creatures the most misera-ble. So that besides the wickedness, we may clearly discover the folly of Atheism, that deprives Man of his chiefelt Comfort at all times, and his only Comfort in the greatest exigencies. For in this mutable state he is liable to so many difasters and wretched accidents, that none can have an affurance of prosperity one day. How frail and uncertain is Life, the foundation of all temporal Enjoyments? It depends upon fo many things, that 'tis admirable it subsists for a little time. The least vessel in the Body that breaks or is stopt, interrupting the course of the Blood and Humours, ruines its economy. Sometimes in its vigorous confiftence, when most distant from Sickness'tis nearest to Death, A little eruption of Blood in the Brain is sufficient to stop the Chap. passages of the Spirits, and deprive it of motion and life. And the changes of things without us, are so various and frequent, so great and sudden, that tis an excess of folly, a dangerous rest to be secure in the enjoyment of them. The fame person sometimes affords an example of the greatest Prosperity, and of greater Misery in the space of a few hours. Henry the fourth of France, in the midst of the triumphs of Peace, was by a blow from a facrilegious hand difpatcht in his Goach, and his bloody Corps forfaken by his Servants, expos'd to the veiw of all; so that as the || Historian observes, there || Mazeray. was but a moment between the adorations and oblivion of that great Prince. All flesh is Graß, and the glory of it as the flower of the Graß.

The Existence

Grass. What ever disguises its im-Chap. 7. 9rays. what ever gives it lustre, is perfections, and gives it lustre, is but superficial, like the colour and ornament of a Flower, whole matter is only a little Dust and Water, and is as weak and fading. Who then can possess these things without a just jealousie, lest they should flip away, or be ravisht from him by violence? And in this respect Man is most unhappy; for befides the affliction of present evils, Reason, that separates him from other Creatures, and exalts him above them, is the fatal instrument of his trouble by the prevision of future evils. Ignorance of future miseries is a priviledge, when Knowledg is ineffectual to prevent them. Unfeen evils are swallow'd whole, but by an apprehensive imagination are tasted in all their bitterness. By forethoughts we run

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run to meet them before they are come, and feel them before they are truly sensible. This was the reason of that complaint in the Poet, seeing the prognosticks of misery many years before it arrived,

Sit subitum quodcunque paras, sit cæca futuri

Mens hominis fati, liceat sperare timen-

Let the evils thou preparest surprize us, let us not be tormented by an unhappy expectation of them, let the success of future things be concealed from our sight, let it be permitted to us to hope in the midst of our fears.

Indeed God has mercifully hid the most of future events from humane curiosity. For as on the

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Chap. 7. one fide by the view of great Pro-fperity, Man would be tempted to an excess of Pride and Joy, so on the other (as we are more sensibly touch'd with pain than pleasure) if when he begins to use his Reason and apprehensive faculty, by a secret of Opticks he should have in one fight presented all the Afflictions that should befall him in theWorld, how languishing would his life be? This would keep him on a perpetual Rack, and make him fuffer together & at all times, what shall be endured separately and but once. But though the most of future things lie in obscurity, yet often we have sad intimations of approaching evils that awaken our fears. Nay, how many Tempests and Shipwracks do Men fuffer in Terra firma, from the fuspition of Calamities that shall never

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never be? Imaginary Evils ope-Chap. 7 stantial Griefs. Now how can such an infirm and jealous creature, in the midst of things that are every minute subject to the Laws of Mutability, be without inward trouble? What can give him repose and tranquillity in his best condition, but an assurance that nothing can befal him but according to the wife Counsel and gracious Will of God? And in extream Afflictions, in the last Agonies, when no humane things can afford relief, when our dearest Friends are not able to comfort us, but are miserable in our misenes, what can bear up our fainting hope but the Divine Power, a foundation that never fails? what can allay our forrows but the Divine Goodness tenderly inclin'd

Chap.7.

to fuccour us? Our help is in the Lord who made Heaven and Earth. The Creation is a vilible Monument of his Perfections. The Lord is a Sun, and a Sheild. He is al-sufficient to supply our wants, and satisfie our defires. As the Sun gives Life and Joy to all the World, and if there were millions of more kinds of Beings and of Individuals in it, his Light and Heat are sufficient for them all; so the Divine Goodnels can supply us with all good things, and ten thousand Worlds more. And his Power can secure to us his Favours, and prevent troubles; or, which is more admirable, make them beneficial and subservient to our felicity. He is a sure refuge, an inviolable Sanctuary to which we may retire in all our streights. His Omnipotence is directed by unerring Wifdom

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dom, and excited by infinite love, Chap.7. for the good of those who faithfully obey him. An humble confidence in him, frees us from anxieties, preserves a firm peaceful temper in the midst of Storms. This gives a superiority of Spirits, a true Empire of Mind over all outward things.

Rex est qui posuit metus, Occurritque suo libens Fato, nec queritur mori.

What was the vain boast of Philosophers, that by the power of Reason they could make all accidents to contribute to their happiness, is the real priviledgs we obtain by a regular trust in God, who directs and orders all events that happen for the everlasting good of his Servants. In the worst circumstances,

The Eristence, &c.

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hap.7. Itances we may rejoyce in Hope, in a certain and quiet expectation of a bleffed issue. In Death it self we are more than Conquerers. O Lord God of Hosts, blessed is the Man that trusts in thee.

This give a supercoury of Spinis, a way the Lampine of the land of the second of the s

Cheng high politic metres, Ocean highe fuo libens A A H De queritin mort.

What was the vain beaft of bailed opening that by the power of sellent they could make all sellent dens to contribute to their happing acts, is the real priviledge we obtain by a regular and in God, who distills and orders all events that happen for the everlathing good of haster and, in the world circum-laster and order world circum-laster and.

THE

IMMORTALITY

OF THE

SOUL.

CHAP. VIII.

The Immortality of the Soul depends on the conservative influence of God. Natural and Moral Arguments to prove that God will continue it for ever. The Soul is incapable of perishing from any corruptible Principles, or separable parts. Its spiritual Nature is evident by the acts of its principal Faculties. The Under.

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The Immortality

standing conceives spiritual Objects; is not confin'd to singular and present things: Reflects upon it self: Corrects the errors of the Sense: Does not Suffer from the excellence of the Object. Is vigorous in its operations when the body is decay'd, which proves it to be an immaterial faculty. In answer to objections against the Souls Spiritual Nature. That the first notices of things are conveyed through the Senfes, does not argue it to be a material faculty. That it depends on the temper of the Body in its superior operations, is no prejudice to its Spiritual Nature.

H Aving dispatch'd the consideration of the prime fundamental Truth, that there is a most Wise and Powerful Creator of all things, I shall next discourse of the Immortality of the humane Soul, and

and the Eternal Recompences in Chap. the future State.

In treating of the Souls Immortality, I shall not insist on nice and subtile Speculations, that evaporate and leave nothing fubstantial for conviction or practife: but consider those proofs that may induce the mind to affent, and work upon the will to make its choice of objects with respect to their endless consequences hereafter. And first, it must be premised, that Immortality is not an inseparable perfection of its nature; for 'tis capable of annihilation. What ever had a beginning may have an end. God only bath Immortality in an absolute sense, and communicates it according to his pleasure. The perpetual duration of humane Souls is a priviledge that depends on his sustaining vertue, (without which

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Chap. 8. which they would relapse into a streely which they would relapse into a flows from his Power as the first moment of their existence. His Will is the measure of their continuance. I shall therefore consider fuch things as strongly argue that God will not withdraw his conservative influence that is necessary to their Immortality. The Arguments are of two forts, Natural and Moral. The first prove that God has made the Soul incapable of Death by any Internal Causes of perishing from its Nature, and in that declares not obscurely that he will ever preserve it. The fecond fort are drawn from the Divine Attributes, from the ends of the Creator in making the Soul, and the visible Oeconomy of Providence in the government of the World, that are infallible,

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lible, and will produce a sufficient Chap. 8. conviction in minds equally in- chin'd.

. The Soul is incapable of Death by any Internal Causes of perishing in its Nature. The distolution of things proceeds from the corruptible principles of which they are compounded, and the feparable parts of which they confift, and into which they are resolved. Therefore all mixt and material Beings are subject to dissolution. But the humane Soul is a spiritual substance, | simple with-|| Et quiem out any disagreeing qualities, as simplex animi heat and cold, moisture and dri- natura esset, ness, the seeds of corruption. The in se quic-Essences of things are best disco-quam adver'd by their peculiar operations, for sui, atq, that argue a real distinction be-dissimile, nm tween them, and from whence a posse eum dirife the different notions whereby Senect.

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Chap. 8. they are conceived. The Soul of a Brute, performs the same vital acts as the Soul of a Plant, yet 'tis visibly of a more elevated nature, because it performs the functions of the fenfitive life that are proper to it. The rational Soul performs the same fensitive acts as the soul of Brutes, but that it is of a higher order of substances, appears by its peculiar objects and immediate operations upon them.

The two principal faculties of the humane Soul are the Understanding and the Will, and the Actions flowing from them exceed the power of the most refined snatter however modified, and transcend any Principle that is only endowed with the powers of fense and imagination confin'd to

matter.

To proceed orderly, I will first conconfider the Mind with respect to Chap. the quality of its objects, and manner how it is conversant about them.

1. The conception of things purely spiritual, God, Angels, leparate Souls, the Analogies, the differences, and various respects of things, argue it to be of a lpiris mal nature. For 'tis an evident principle, there must be an Analogy between the Faculty and the Object. A material Glass cannot represent a Spirit; it has no receptivity to take into it an object without figure, colour, and diverfity of parts, the affections of mat-A spiritual object can only be apprehended by a spiritual operation, and that can only be produced by a spiritual Power. The being of things is the root of their working. Now rarifie matter to the

Chap. 8. the highest fineness, reduce it to imperceptible Atoms, 'tis as truly Matter as a gross Body. For lightness and tenuity are as proper Attributes of matter, as weight and denfity, though less sensible.

If a Beaft could apprehend what discourse is, it were rational. The Soul therefore that understands the Spirituality of things is Spiritual; otherwise it should act extra Spharam. The Intellectual Eye alone sees Him that is Invisible, understands the reasons of Truth and Justice, looks beyond the bright Hills of Time into the Spiritual Eternal World, so that 'tis evident there is an affinity and likeness in Nature between them.

2. Material faculties are confin'd to the narrow compass of singular and present things; but the Mind abstracts from all individu-

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als, their pure Nature, and forms Chap. 8. their Universal Species. The Eye can only see a colour'd object before it, the Mind contemplates the nature of Colours. It ascends above all the distinctions of Time, recollects what is past, foresees Celer Diwhat is to come, no interval of cognatus, space or time can hinder its sight. Commi mundo, omni mundo, besides, the fwift slight of the Par. Sen. thoughts over Sea and Land, the persuasi, sic soaring of the Mind in a moment sentio, quum above the Stars, as if its essence tanta Celeritus animorum were all vigour and activity, prove st, tanta methat 'tis not a material Power.

3. Sense only acts in a direct ritorum, fuway, without reflecting upon its videntia, tot self or its own operations. Tis scientie, tot inventa, non true there is an experimental per-posse eam naception included in vital and sen-turam que sible acts; but 'tis far below pro-net mortalem per reflection. The Eye doth not esse. Cic. see the action by which it sees,

The Immortality

Chap. 8. nor the imagination reflect on it felf: for that being conversant only about representations transmitted through the fenses, cannot frame an Image of it self and gaze upon it, there being no such resemblance conveyed by the mediation of the outward Organs. But the rational Soul not only contemplates an object, but reflects on its own contemplation, and retir'd from all commerce with External things, views it self, its qualities and state, and by this gives testi-mony of its Spiritual and Immortal Nature.

4. The Mind rectifies the falle reports of the Senses, and forms the Judgment of things not according to their impressions, but by such rational evidence of which they are not capable. When the Object is too distant, or the Medi-

um unfit, or the Organs distem- Chap per'd, the Senses are deceived. The Stars of the brightest magnitude feem to be trembling sparks of light: but the Understanding confiders that the representations of things are imperfect and less difinct proportionably to their distance, and conceives of their magnitude accordingly. A straight Oar appears crooked in the Water, but Reason observes the error in the Refractions, when the Image passes through a double medium of unequal clearnels. Sweet things tafte bitter to one in a Feaver, but the mind knows that the bitterness is not in the things, but in the viciated Palat, Moreover, how many things are collected by Reafon that transcend the power of Fancy to conceive, nay are repugnant to its conception? What corporeal

Chap. 8. poreal Image can represent the immensity of the Heavens, as the Mind by convincing arguments apprehends it? The Antipodes walk erect upon the Earth, yet the Fancy cannot conceive them but with their Heads downward. Now if the Mind were of the same nature with the corporeal Faculties, their judgment would be uniform.

degree by the excessive vehemence of their Objects. Too bright a light blinds the Eye. Too strong a sound deafs the Ear. But the Soul receives vigor and perfection from the excellence and sublimity of its object; and when most intent in contemplation, and concenter'd in its self, becomes as it were all Mind, so that the operations of it as sensitive are suspended,

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of the Soul.

feels the purest delights far above Chap. the perception of the lower faculties. Now from whence is the diftemper of the Senses in their exercise, but from matter, as well that of the Object as the Organ? And from whence the not fuffering of the Mind, but from the impressing the forms of Objects, separated from all matter, and confequently in an immaterial faculty? For there is of necessity a convenience and proportion, as between a Being and the manner of its operations, fo between that, and the subject wherein it works. This strongly argues the Soul to be immaterial, in that 'tis impassible from matter, even when it is most conversant in it. For it refines it from corporeal accidents, to a kind of spirituality proportioned to its nature. And from hence

Chap. 8.

Chap. 8. hence proceeds the unbounded eapacity of the Soul in its conceptions, partly because the forms of things inconfistent in their na tures, are so purified by the Mind, as they have an objective existence withour enmity or contrariety, partly because in the workings of the Mind, one act does not require a different manner from another, but the fame reaches to all that is intelligible in the same order.

6. The Senses are subject to languishing and decay, and begin to die before Death. But the Soul many times in the weakness of Age is most lively and vigorously productive. The intellectual Offspring carries no marks of the decays of the Body. In the approaches of Death, when the corporeal faculties are relaxt and very faintly perform their functions, the workings

of the Soul.

workings of the Soul are often rais'd above the usual pitch of its activity. And this is a pregnant probability that 'tis of a spiritual Nature, and that when the Body. which is here its Prison rather than Mansion, falls to the Earth, 'tis not opprest by its ruins, but set free and injoys the truest liberty. This made Heraclitus fay that the Kan Hed-Soul goes out of the Body as wheter wo-Lightning from a Cloud, because περ ασραπή νέφες διατit's never more clear in its conceptions than when freed from mat-σωματω. ter. And what Lucretius excellent-Plutarch. in Rom. ly expresses in his Verses, is true in another sense than he intended;

Cedit item retro, de Terra quod fuit ante,

In Terram; sed quad missum est ex Ætheris oris,

Id rursus Cali fulgentia Templa receptant.

Chap. 8. What sprang from Earth falls to its native place:

What Heav'n inspir'd releast from

the weak tye

Of flesh, ascends above the shining Sky.

Before I proceed, I will briefly confider the Objections of some who secretly favour the part of implety.

in its intellectual operations depends on the Phantalms, and those are drawn from the representations of things conveyed through the senses.

But it will appear this does not enervate the force of the Arguments for its Spiritual Nature. For this dependance is only objective, not instrumental of the Souls perception. The first images of things hings are introduc'd by the mediation of the Senses, and by their presence (for nothing else is requisit) the mind is excited, and draws a Picture resembling, or if it please not resembling them, and so operates alone, and compleats its own work. Of this we have a clear experiment in the conceptions which the Mind forms of things so different from the first Notices of them by the Senses.

The first apprehensions of the Deity are from the visible effects of his Power, but the Idea in which the Understanding contemplates him, is fram'd by removing all imperfections that are in the Creatures, and consequently that he is not corporeal. For whatsoever is so, is liable to corruption, that is absolutely repugnant to the perfection of his Nature. Now the

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Chap. 8. common Sense and Fancy, only powerful to work in Matter, cannot truly express an immaterial Being. Indeed as Painters by their Colours represent invisible things, as Darkness, the Winds, the Internal affections of the Heart, fo that by the representations, the Thoughts are awakn'd of fuch objects; so the Fancy may with the like Art shadow forth Spiritual Beings by the most resembling forms taken from fensible things. Thus it imagins the Angels under the likeness of young Men with Wings, to express their vigor and velocity. But the Mind by its internal light conceives them in another manner, by a Spiritual form, that exceeds the utmost efficacy of the corporeal Organs, so that 'tis evident the Soul as intellectual in its fingular and

and most proper operations, is not Chap. 8. affilted by the ministry of the Sen-

2. Tis objected that the Soul in its superiour operations depends on the convenient temper of the Body. The thoughts are clear and orderly when the Brain is compos'd. On the contrary when the predominancy of any humour distempers it, the Mind feels its infirmities. And from hence it seems to be of a corporeal nature, depending on the Body in its Being, as in its Working.

But this, if duly consider'd, will raise no just prejudice against its Spiritual Immortal Nature.

For,

1. The Sympathy of things is no convincing Argument that they are of the same Nature.

There

There may be so firict an union of Chap. 8. There may be to first an union of Beings of different natures, that they must necessarily be subject to impressions from one another. Can any Reasons demonstrate that a Spiritual Substance endowed wich the powers of understanding and will, cannot be united in a vital composition to a Body, as the Vegetative Soul is in Plants, and the sensitive in Beasts? There is no implicite repugnance in this that proves it impossible. Now if Juch a complex Being were in Nature, how would that spiritual Soul act in that Body, that in its first union with it (excepting some universal Principles) is a raja tabula, as a white Paper, without the notices of things written in it? Certainly in no other imaginable manner than as Mans Soul does now.

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Indeed

Indeed if Man as compounded Cha of Soul and Body, were a fensitive Animal, and only rational as partaking of the Universal Intellect lent to individuals for a time, and retiring at Death to its first Being; as Averroes fancied, there would be no cause of such a Sympathy: but the Soul as intellectual, is an informing, not affilting Form. And it is an evident proof of the Wisdom and Goodness of the Creator, by this strict and sensible union, to make the Soul vigilant and active to provide for the convenience and comfort of the Body in the present state, and that notwithstanding such a discord in Nature, there should be such a concord in inclinations.

ons of the Soul are hindred by the ill habit of the Body, yet the Mind N 3 fuffers

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suffers no hurt, but still retains its Chap. 8. lufters no hurt, but ith retains its pairing. A skilful Musitian does not lose his Art that plays on a Harp when the strings are false, though the Musick is not so harmonious as when 'tis justly tuned. The visive faculty is not weakned, when the Air by a collection of gross vapours is so thick, that the Eye cannot distinctly perceive distant objects. When by the heats of Wine or a Disease the Spirits are inflam'd, and made fierce and unruly, and the Images in the Fancy are put into confusion, the mind cannot regularly govern and use them: When the fumes are evaporated, the Brain is restor'd to its temper and fitness for intellectual operations, but the mind is not cur'd, that was not hurt by those Distempers.

Briefly,

Briefly, the Denyers of the Souls Chap. Immortality, resemble in their arguings some who oppos'd the Divinity of our Saviour. For as Apollinaris and Eunomius from Christ's Bafil Selenc. fleeping so profoundly in a storm, Orat. 2. instead of concluding that he was a real Man, falfly inferr'd that he was not God: Because sleep is not the satisfaction of a Divine appetite, the Deity is incapable of it. But they confider'd not his more than humane Power in rebuking the Winds and the Sea with that Empire, that was felt and obeyed by those insensible creatures: so those whose interest inclines them to believe that Man is intirely mortal, alledge that he acts as a sensitive Creature, for he is so, but consider not that he has also more noble faculties, to understand objects purely spiritual, and God himself

Chap. 8. himself the most perfect in that order, which no material principle, though of the most fubrile and finest contexture, can reach unto. Besides, the more 'tis disengaged from Matter, and retird from the senses, the more capable

it is to perform its most exalted Mibi quioperations, and confequently by demnunquam persuaderi an absolute separation 'tis so far potuit animos from perishing, that it ascends to dum in corits | perfection. For the manner poribus effent, mortalibus vivere, quum how it acts in the separate state 'tis emori. Nec ve- to no purpose to search, being most secret, and 'twill be to no ro tum anipurpose to find, as being of no inmum effe ir.fluence to excite us to the con-Sipientem quum ex instant and diligent performance of Sipienti cor-'Tis therefore a fruitpere evasifit, sed quumom- our duty. ni admistione less curiosity to inquire after it. corporis purus But to imagine that because the capisset, tum Soul in the present state cannot essessation understand clearly without the con-Cic. de Sen.

convenient disposition of the Body, therefore it cannot act at all without it, is as absur'd as to fancy because a man confin'd to a Chamber cannot see the objects without but through the Windows, therefore he cannot see at all, but through such a Medium, and that when he is out of the Chamber, he has totally lost his sight.

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CHAPAIX.

remained by the external applica-

covers are moved and de-

The acts of the Will confider'd. Its choice of things distastful to Sense, and sometimes destructive to the Body, argue it to be a spiritual principle. The difference between Man and Brutes amplified. The Spiritual operations of the Soul may be perform'd by it self in a separate state. This is a strong proof God will contitinue

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The Immortality

tinue it. The Platonick argument that Man unites the two orders of Natures intelligent and fenfible, immortal and perishing.

He acts of the Will, that imperial faculty, prove it to be of a higher order of substances than the sensitive Soul. The Brutes are acted by pure necessity; their powers are moved and determined by the external application of objects. Tis visible that all kinds of sensitive Creatures in all times, are carried in the same manner by the potent Iway of Nature towards things futable to their corporeal faculties. But the rational Will is a principle of free election, that controuls the lower appetite, by reftraining from the most pleasant and powerful allurements, and choosing sometimes

times the most distaltful things to Chap. fense. Now from whence arises this contention? If the rational Will be not of a higher nature than the fenfual appetite, why does it not consent with its inclinations? How comes the Soul to mortife the most vehement defires of the Body, a part fo near in Nature, so dear by Affection, and fo apt to refent an injury ? And fince tis most evident that fensitive Creatures always with the utmost of their force defend their Beings, from whence is it that the rational Soul in some cases against the strongest recoile and reluctance of Nature, exposes the body to Death? If it depended on the body for subfiftence it would use all means to preserve it. Upon the fight of contrary motions in an Engine we conclude they are

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are caused by diverse Springs, and can such opposite desires in Man proceed from the same Princi. lo son ed

> of the rational Soul be not of a Sublimer order than the sensitive. it follows that Men are Beafts, and Beafts are Men. Now 'tis as impossible to be what they are not, as not to be what they are. But do the Beafts reverence a Divine Power, and at flated times perform acts of folemn Worship? Is Conscience the immediate rule of their Actions? Will Lectures of Temperance, Chastity, Justice arrest them in the eager pursuite of sensual satisfactions? Do they feel remorfe in doing ill, and pleafure in doing well? Do they exercise the Mind in the search of Truth? have they defires of a sublime intellectual good that the low

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low sensual part cannot pertake Chap.9. of? have they a capacity of fuch an immense Blessedness, that no finite Object in its qualities and duration can satisfie? Ask the Beafts, and they will tell you. Their actions declare the contrary. But the humane Soul has awful apd prehensions of the Deity, distinguilhes of things by their agree ment or disconformity to his Laws: Its best and quickest Pleafures and most piercing wounding Troubles are from Moral Caufes. What colour, what talke has Vertue? yearhe purified Soul is inflam'd by the views of its most amiable, though not sensible beauty, and delighted in its sweetness. How often is it so ravish'd in contemplation of God, the great Object of the rational Powers, as to lose the desire and memory of all

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carnal things? What stronger Argirment and clearer proof can Hoc igitur there be of its affinity with | God, Argumentum than that Divine things are most futable to it? for if the rational Soul were of the fame order with Divina delethe fenfitive, as it could not possictant. Senec. bly conceive any being more excellent than what is corporeal, fo it could only relish gross things wherein Senfe is convertant.

> The fum of what has been dif court of, is this, that by confidering the different operations of Man and of Brines, we may clearly discern the different powers of acting, wherewith the rational Soul is endowed in the one, and the fensitive in the other. buThe Soul in Beafts performs no operations independent on the Body, that ferves it either as an instrument, or matter of their producti

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on: fuch are the use of the Senses, Cha Nutrition, Generation, all the internal work, and the preparing the Phantalms, without which they would be far less serviceable to Man. 'Tis not strange therefore that it perishes with the Body, there being no reason for its duration in a separate state, fince 'tis fit only to act by the ministry of the Body. But the Soul of Man, befides the operations that proceed from it as the form of the Body it animates, fuch are all common to Man with Plants and Animals, understands, discourses, reflects on it self, that are acts proper to its nature, and included in its true conception, whereby 'tis distinguished from that of Brutes. Indeed the exercise of sensitive operations depends so absolutely on its union with the body, that they

Chap. 9.

they cannot be perform'd, nor conceived as possible without its presence, and the use of corporeal organs. But the more excellent operations that proceed from the higher faculties, wherewith 'tis indowed not as the form of a material Being, but as a spiritual substance, such as subsist for ever without any communion with Bodies, so entirely belong to it by the condition of Nature, that for their production 'tis sufficient of it self. The Understanding and Will are Angelical Powers, and to know and will, and to be variously moved with pleasure or grief according to the qualities of objects sutable or disagreeing, are proper to those Natures that have no alliance with Bodies. It follows therefore the Soul, in its separate state, may contemplate, and de-

delightfully enjoy intellectual ob- Chap. 9. jects, or torment it self with reflection on things contrary to its will: Nay, it understands more clearly, & is affected more strongly than before. For these operations during its conjunction are not common to the Body, but produc'd by it in the quality of a Mind, and are then most vigorous and expedite, most noble and worthy of it, when the Soul withdraws from all sensible things into it felf, and is most rais'd above the manner of working that is proper and proportion'd to the Body. And from hence 'tis reafonable to conclude that it furvives the Body, not losing with it the most noble faculty, the Mind, that is peculiar to it, nor the necessary instrument of using it. For as the universal Providence of God

Chap. 9. God supports the lower rank of Creatures in their natural Life, so long as their faculties are qualified for actions proper to that life, we may strongly argue that his confervative Influence will not be withdrawn from the humane Soul that is apt and capable in its own nature to exist, and act in a separate state. In short, the Understanding and elective Powers declare its descent from the || Father of Spirits, whose image is ingraven in its nature, not as in brittle glass, but an incorruptible Diamond.

I Tã Đểi và α θανάτω ίμιοιότατον. Plato.

I shall add to the natural arguments an observation of the Platouists, that of all other Philosophers approach nearest the truth in their discourses of God and the Soul, of the Majesty of the one, and the excellence of the other: They observe that the Unity of the

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the World is so closely combin'd in all its parts, the feveral beings that compole it, that between the Superiour and inferiour Species there are middle Natures, wherein they meet, that no vacuum may interpole in the feries of things. This is evident by confidering that between inanimate bodies and living, insensible and sensible, there are some beings that partake of the extremes, and link them together, that the order of things not being interrupted, the Mind by continual easie degrees may ascend from the lowest to the highest in perfection. And from this just and harmonious proportion that is proper to essences, the intelligible beauty and musick of the World arises, that is so pleasing to the confidering Mind. Now what band is there to joyn the two ranks

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of beings, intelligible and sensible, but Man, that partakes of Sense, common with the Beafts, and Understanding to the Angels. For this reason they give him the mysterious name of Horizon, the ending and union of the two Hemispheres, the superiour and inferiour, the two orders of Natures, immortal, and that shall perish.

CHAP. X.

The moral Arguments for the Souls Immortality. The restless desire of the Soul to an intellectual eternal happiness, argues it survives the Body. The lower order of Creatures obtain their perfection here. It reflects upon Nature, if the more noble fails of its end. That wicked Men would choose Annihilation, is no proof proof against Man's natural desires Ch. 10.

of Immortality. The necessity of a

future state of Recompences for moral actions, proves the Soul to be
immortal. The wisdom of God, as
Governour of the World, requires
there be Rewards and Punishments
ameest to his Laws. Eternal Rewards are only powerful to make
Men obedient to them in this corrupt
state. Humane Laws are no sufficient security of Vertue, and restraint from Vice.

ral Inducements to confirm our belief that God will preferve the Soul in its being and activity hereafter. And of this we have sufficient evidence by internal light, the natural notions of the Deity, and by many visible
Testimonies in the Order of his

Ch. 19.

the World. The reftless defire of the

Soul to an intellectual and eremal Felicity not attainable here, is a strong Argument that it's referv'd to a future state. The Understanding is inclin'd to the knowledge of Truth, the Will to the fruition of Goodness; and in what idegrees foever we discover the one, and enjoy the other in our present condition, we are not content. As one that is burnt up with such a Thirst that onely an Ocean can quench, and has but a little fream to refresh him. God is the onely satisfying Object of the rational Faculties, and here our conceptions of Him are so imperfect, that we approach nearer the Truth by denying what is inconsistent with his Nature, than in affirming the proper · /4

proper Perfections of it. And the communications of his Love to us inflames the Soul with new defires of fuller enjoyment. desire of Happiness is essential to Man, as Man. Now 'tis universal ly acknowledged that Nature is not a vain Principle, it produces no fuperfluous inclinations in any fort of Creatures, much less in Man, and in that which is most proper to him, and in order to the railing him to his Perfection. The natural motion of a Stone has a Center where to reft; Plants arrive to their full growth and beau! ty; the Beafts have present satisfaction, and are happy Animals. But Man, in whom the two lower lives and the intellectual are united, is here only in his way to happinels, his best endeavours are but imperfect esfays towards it.

Now

Ch. 10.

Now if the Soul does not furvive the Body, and in a separate state obtain its desires, it will reflect upon Nature for imprudence or malignity, in dealing worse with the most noble order of visible Beings. The Beafts excel Man in the quickness and vivacity of the powers of Sense, being their perfection, and in him subordinate faculties, and are more capable of pleasure from sensible things; and Reason, his eminent Prerogative, makes him more liable to misery. For Man ardently aspiring to a Spiritual Happinels, that here he cannot enjoy, much less hereafter if the Soul perish, is under a remediless infe-His Mind is deceived and stain'd with Errors, his Will tormented with fruitless longings after an impossible Object. But if we unveil the face of Nature, God appears

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pears (who is the Author of our be-Ch. ing, and of this defire to proper to it)and we cannot suspect, without the highest Impiety, that he would make all Men in vain, and deceive them by a falle appearance. But he gives us in it a faithful prelage of things future, and indifcernable to sense, to be injoyed in immortali-This Argument will be the more forcible, if we consider that holy Souls, who excel in Knowledge and Vertue, do most inflamedly long for the enjoyment of this pure felicity. And is it possible that the Creator should not only endow Man with rational powers, but with vertues that exalt and inlarge their capacity to render him more miserable? To imagine that he cannot, or will not fully and eternally satisfie them, is equally injurious to his perfections. It therefore

fore necessarily follows that the Soul lives after Death, and fully enjoys the happinels it earnestly defir d whiles in the darkness of

this earthly Tabernacle.

Add further, that Man alone of all Creatures in the lower World understands and desires Immortality. The conception of it is peculi-ar to his Mind, and the defire of it as intrinsick to his Nature as the defire of Bleffedness. For that Bleffednels that ends, is no perefect Bleffedness, nor that which every one defires. Man alone feels and knows that his Nature is capable of excellent perfections and joys. Now if he shall cease to be for ever, why is this knowledge and delire but to render him more unhappy, by grief for the present shortness of life, and by delpair of a future Immortality? In this respect also the condition

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of the Beafts would be better than Ch. 10. of Men. For though they are for ever deprived of Life, yet they are uncapable of regret, because they cannot by reflection know that they possessit, and are without the leift imagination or defire of immortality of They are alive to the present, but dead to the future. By alfavourable ignorance they pals into a state of not being, with as much indifference, as from watching to fleep, or from labour to repose But to Man that understands and values Life and Immortality how dark and hideous are the thoughts of Annihilation? Let him enjoy all possible delights to sense, or desireable to the powers of the Soul, How will the sweetness of all be loft in the bitternels of that thought that he shall be deprived of them for ever? How frightful is

Mors is terribilis, quoguuntur.Cic.

is the continual apprehension of an everlasting period to his being, and all enjoyments suitable to it? After rum cum vità that a prospect of Eternity has been omnia extin- shown to him, how tormenting is the thought that he must die as the stupid Ox, or the vilest Vermine of the Earth, and with him the fallacious instinct of Nature that inclin'd him to the most durable happines? If it were thus, O living Image of the Immortal God, thy condition is very milerable! What the Romans wisht in great anguish for the loss of Augustus, that he had not been born, or had not died, is more reasonable in this case : it were better that the defire of eternal Life had not been born in Man, or that it should be fulfilled. If it be objected that many Men are not only without fear of annihilation, but desire it, therefore Immortality

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is not such a priviled gthat the rea- Ch. 10. fonable Creature, naturally aspires to:

lanswer; the inference is very preposterous, for the reason of their choice is, because they are attentive to an object infinitely more | fad ||Plerofq; conand afflictive, that is, a state of e- Scientia meriverlasting torments, which the esse post morguilty conscience presages to be the sem, magis just recompence of their crimes. So optare, quam that enclosed between two evils, lunt enim exan eternal state of not being, and tingui, quam an Eternity of misery, 'tis reasona- reparari. ble to venture on the leaft, to efcape the greater. But supposing any hopes of future happiness, they would defire immortality as an excellent benefit. As one that has loft the pleasure and taste of Life, by confuming fickness, and sharp pains, or some other great calamities, may be willing to die, but suppoling

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poling a freedom from those evils. the defire of Life as the most precious and dear enjoyment would strongly return. And that the defire of Immortality is natural, I shall add one most visible restimony. For whereas the lower fort of Creatures, that finally perish in Death, are without the least know ledg of a future estate, and are Tigorie , simila therefore careless of leaving a memorial after them: on the contrary, Men are solicitous to secure their names from oblivion, as confeious of their fouls furviving in another World. This ardent passion not directed by higher Principles, excites them to use all means, to obtain a kind of immortality from Mortals. They reward Historians, Poets, Otatours, to celebrate their actions. They erect Monuments of durable Brass and Marble to repre-Milled **fent**

Ch. I.d.

sent the Effigies of their faces: They endeavour by triumphal Arches, Pyramids, and other works of Magnificence, to eternize their Fame, to live in the eyes, and mouths, and memories of the living in all succeeding times. These indeed are vain shadows, yet argue the defire of immortality to be natural. As 'tis evident there is a natural affection in Parents to preserve their Children, because when they are depriv'd of their living presence, they dearly value and preserve their dead Pictures, though but a poor confolation.

2. The necessity of a future state wherein a just retribution shall be made of rewards and punishments to Men according to their actions in this life, includes the Souls Immortality. For the proof

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proof of this I shall lay down such things as certainly establish it.

1. The first Argument is drawn from the Wildom of God in governing the reasonable World. In the quality of Creator he has a fupream title to Man, and consequently is his rightful Governour, and Man his natural Subject. Now Man being endowed with free faculties, the powers of knowing and chuting, is under a Law clearly imprest on his Nature by the Author of it, that strictly forbids moral evil, and commands moral And to enforce the Authority of this Law, the Wisdom of the Lawgiver, and the temper of the Subject requires, that willing obedience should be attended with certain rewards, and voluntary disobedience with unavoidable

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able punishments. For Man be-Ch. 10. ing so fram'd as to fore-see the consequences of his actions, the inward springs of Hope and Fear work and govern him accordingly. And these necessary effects of Vertue and Vice must be so great, asmay rationally induce Man to reverence and observe the Law of his Maker, in the presence of the strongest Temptation to the contrary. Now if we consider Man in this corrupt state, how averse from good, and inclin'd to evil, how weak his directive faculty, how disordered and turbulent his Passions, how many Pleasures are pressing on the Senses, to precipitate his slippery disposition into a compliance, it is very evident, that besides the rules of morality, eternal Reasons are necessary to preserve in him a dutiful respect to God.

Ch. 10.

God. Take away the hopes and fears of things hereafter, what Antidote is of force against the poison of inherent Lusts? what can disarm the World of its Allurements? how can Man void of Innocence, and full of Impurity, relift the delights of Sin, when the inclinations from within, are as ftrong as temptations from without? how greedily will he purfue the advantages of this mortal condition, and strive to gratifie all the sensual applities? The Romans when the fear of Carthage, that alpired to a superiority in Empire, was removed, presently degenerated from Military Valour and Civil Vertues, into Softness and Luxury. So if Man were abfolv'd from the fear of Judgment to come, no restraint would be Arong enough to bridle the impe-

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Carthaginis
metu, sublatâque Imperii
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tuous resolutions of his depraved will. If there were no evil of punishment after Death, there is no evil of Sin but will be continued in till Death. And Man, who by nature is incomparably above, by Vice would be incomparably beneath the Beafts: in-To-much as joyning to their natural bruitishness, the craft and malice of Wit, he would become more monstrously (that is, designedly and freely) brutish. Now is it conceivable that God, to keep his Subjects in order, should be constrained to allure them with a beautiful deceit, the promise of a Heaven that has no reality, or to urge them by the feigned terrors of a Hell, that is no where? This is inconfiftent with his Wisdom, and many other Attributes.

If it be objected, That humane Laws

Laws are a sufficient security of Vertue, and curb from Vice.

I answer, This is apparently

false: For,

1. Soveraign Princes are exempted from temporal penalties, yet their faults are of the greatest malignity by the contagion of their examples, and the mischief of their effects. Their actions are more potent to govern than their Laws. Innumerable perish by the imitation of their Vices. Now to leave the highest rank of Men unaccountable, would cause a great disorder in the conduct of the reasonable Creature, and be a spot in the Divine Providence.

2. Many Sins directly opposit to Reason, and injurious to the Divine Honour, are not within the compass of Civil Laws. Such are some Sins that immediately

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concern God, the disbelief and undervaluing his Excellencies; and fome that immediately respect a Man's self, as Sloth, Luxury, &c. And all vicious Principles that secretly lodge in the heart, and infect it with deep pollutions, and many sins that break forth, of which the outward acts are not pernicious to the publick.

3. Many eminent vertues are of a private nature, as Humility, Meekness, Patience, a readiness to forgive, Gratitude, for which there are no encouragements by civil Laws; so that they are but a weak instrument to preserve Innocence, and restrain from Evil.

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CHAP. XI.

The Justice of God an infallible Argument of future Recompences. The natural notion of God includes Fustice in perfection. In this World sometimes Vertue and Vice are equally miserable. Sometimes Vice us prosperous. Sometimes good Men are in the worst condition. The dreadful consequences of denying a future state. Gods absolute Dominion over the reasonable Creature, is regulated by his Wisdom, and limited by his Will. The effential beauty of Holiness, with the pleasure that naturally results from good actions, and the native turpitude of Sin, with the disturbance of the mind reflecting on it, are not the compleat

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2. THe second Argument arises from the Divine Goodness and Justice. God as Universal Sovereign is Supream Judge of the World. For Judicature being an essentiall part of Royalty, these Rights are inseparable. And the natural notion of the Deity indudes Justice in that Perfection, as infinitely excells the most just Governors on the Earth. This gives us convincing evidence for recompences hereafter. For there is no way of proof more certain, than by fuch maximes as are acknowledged by all to be undoubtedly true by their own light. In the motives of intellectual affent, theMind must finally rest on some that are self-evident, without depending

Ch. 11. pending as to their clearness on any superiour proof; and are pending as to their clearness on therefore called first Principles, the fountains of Discourse. Now that God is most righteous and equal in his Judgment, before whose Throne, Man must appear, that he will by no means condemn the Innocent, nor justify the Guilty; that He is so Pure and Holy that he cannot suffer Sin unrepented of, to go unpunished, is a prime Truth, declared by the voice of Nature. The weakest twylight of Reason discerns the Antipathy of this Connexion, an unjust God indifferent to good or evil. Never any Sect of Idolaters form'd fuch an unworthy Deity, that was abfolutely careless of Vertue and Vice, without distinguishing them in his Affections and Retributions: This This were to debase him beneath Cha the most unreasonable men, for there is none of fuch an impure mind, so perfect a despiler of moral goodness, but has some respect for Vertue and some abhorrence of Vice in others, especially in their Children. From hence it certainly follows, that as Vertue and the reward, Sin and the punishment are allied in a direct line by a most wife Constitution; so 'tis just that the effects should truly correspond with the quality of mens actions. If they reverence God's Laws, 'tis most becoming his Nature and Relation to make them happy: if they abuse their Liberty, and violate his Commands, tis most righteous that they should feel the effects of their chosen wickedness. Now if we look only to things seen, we do not find such equal distriCh. 11. distributions as are suitable to the clear Light, wherewith God has irradiated the Understanding of Man, concerning his Governing-Justice.

are equally miserable here. In common Calamities is there a disference between the Righteous and the Wicked? is their a peculiar Antidote to secure them from pestilential infection? or astrong retreat to defend them from the Sword of a conquering Enemy? have they secret provisions in times of Famine? Are not the Wheat and Tares bound in a bundle and cast into the same fire?

2. Many times the most guilty offenders are not punishe here. They not only escape the justice of Men, by secrecy, by deceit or favour,

of Gods Justice. Nay, by wicked means they are prosperous and

happy.

3. The best Men are often in the worst condition, and merely upon the account of their Goodnels. They are opprest because they do not make relistance, and loaden with sufferings, because they endure them with patience. They are for Gods sake made the spectacles of extreme misery, whilst the insolent Defiers of his Majesty and Laws enjoy all visible felicities. Now in the judgment of Sense, can Holiness be more afflicted if under the displeafure of Heaven, or Wickedness more prosperous if favour'd by it? But this is fuch a monstrous incongruity, that unless we abolish the natural

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natural Notions of the Divine excellencies, it cannot in the leaft degree be admitted. If therefore we confine our thoughts to humane affairs in this life, without taking a prospect into the next World, where a new order of things presents it self, what direful consequences will ensue? This takes away the Sceptre of Providence from the hands of God, and the reverence of God from the Hearts of Men, as if the present state, were a game wherein Chance reigned, and not under the inspection and disposure of a Wise, Just and Powerful Governour. If there be no Life after Death, then Natural Religion in some of its greatest Commands, as to Selfdenial, even to the fuffering the greatest evils rather than do an unjust unworthy action, and to facrifice

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fice Life it self when the Honour Ch. of God and the publick Good require it, is irreconcileable to that natural Defire and Duty, that binds and determines Man to feek his own felicity in conjunction with the Glory of his Maker. But it is impossible that the Divine Law should foil it self, that contrary obligations should be laid on Man by the Wife and Holy Lawgiver. And what terrible confufion would it be in the minds of the best Men? What coldness of affection to God, as if they were not in the comfortable relation of his Children, but wholly without his care? What discouragements in his Service? What dispair in fuffering for him? What danger of their murmuring against Providence, and casting off Religion as a sowre unprofitable feverity, and agmin.

and faying, Surely I have cleanfed my beart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency; or exclaiming with Bru tus in a desperate manner, when he was overcome in Battel, and defeated of his delign, to recover Rome from Tyranny; O infalix Virtus! itane, cum nihil nisi nomen esses, Ego te, tanquam rem aliquam exercui !

> And the enemies to Holiness restrain'd by no respects to a superiour Power, will obey their brutish Lusts as their supream Law; And if fuch diseases or troubles happen that the pleasant operations of Life cease, they may release themselves by a voluntary easy Death, and fall into a fleep never to be diffurb'd; so that they would be efteem'd the only happy perfons.

In fhort, if we only regard things n

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things as they pass in the sensible Ch. I World, we shall be in danger of being over-tempted to Atheism, and to rob God of his Glory and Worship, and that Faith, Fear, Love and Obedience that are due to him. Of this I will produce only two Examples. Diagoras faw a Servant of his stealing from him, and upon his denial of the theft, brought him before the Stathe of Jupiter thundring, and con-Mained him to adjure Jupiter for the honour of his Deity, and of Justice and Fidelity, to strike him dead at his feet with Thunder, if he were guilty of the fact, and after three times repeating the dreadful Oath, he went away untouch'd without harm. Upon the fight of this Diagoras cryed out, as in the Poet;

---- Audis

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---- Audis

Tuvenal. Satyr. 13.

Jupiter hac, nec labra moves, cum mittere vocem

Debueras vel marmoreus, vel ahanews?

Doft hear This Tove, not mov'ft thy lips, when fit it were Thy Brass or Marble spoke?

And whereas he should have been

convinc'd that a Statue could not be a God, he impiously concluded that God was nothing but a Statue; and from that time was hardned in irreclamable Atheilm. So that other | Atheist reports of some of the Romans, that they successfully deceived by false Oaths, even in their most sacred Temple, in the presence of their supream Dei-Plin. lib. 2. ty, the repugnant Avenger of Perjury.

Alii in ipso capitolio fallunt, & fulminantem pejerant Jovem; o nos scelera juvant.

jury. And because Vengeance Ch. 1 did not immediately over - take Guilt, he acknowledged no other God but the World, and Nature, unconcern'd in the governing humane affairs. The disbelief of the future state strikes through the vital principles of Religion, that there is a God, the rewarder of Mens good or evil actions.

It may be objected, that God's Dominion over the reasonable Creature is absolute: For Man ows to him intirely his Being, and all that his Faculties can produce, so that without reflection on Justice, God may after a course of obedience, annihilate him.

To this I answer. The Sovereign Dominion of God in its exercise towards Men is regulated by his Wisdom, and limited by his Will, that is Holy, Just, and Good. O Hence 226

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Hence though the Creature can challenge nothing from God as due to its service, yet there is a Justice of Condecence that arises from the excellencies of his own Nature, and is perfectly confiftent wish the liberty of his Effence, to bestow the entinent Effects of his Favours on his faithful Servants. His Holine's inclines him to love the image of it in the Greature, and his Goodness to reward it. His Government is paternal, and sweetned by descending Love in many Favours and Rewards to his obedient Children of There is a resemblance of our duty to God, and his rewards to us in the order of Nature among Meneril Parents may require of their Children entire obcdience, as being the fecond Causes of their natural Life. And Children may expect from their répunt !

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their Parents what is requisit for Ch. cheir welfare Now God who is the Father of Men, will be true to his own Rules, and deal with them accordingly, but in amanner worthy of his infinite Greatnels. There is not the least obligarion on him, but his unchangeable Perfections are the strongest Affurances, that none of his shall obey him to their final prejudice. Tis a direct contrariety to his Nature, that Men for Conscience of their Duty should part with temporal Happiness in hopes of eternal, and lofe both.

2. It may be objected, That such is the essential beauty of Holiness that it should ravish our Assections without Ornament or Dowry, that its its own Reward, and produces such a sweet Agreement in the Rational Faculties, as

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fully compensates the loss of all lower delights, and fweetens the troubles that befal a vertuous Man in the surere practice of it. And on the contrary, that such is the native foul deformity of Sin, as renders it most odious for it self, that dis its own punishment, being attended with inward disquiets and perplexities, much exceeding all its feeming pleasures. Therefore we cannot certainly infer there will be future recompences? But this receives a clearer Anfwer.to aged at lantage H lance

1. Tis true, that Holiness is most amiable in itself, and in true comparison infinitely excells all the allurements of Sinu alleged

10 200 Tistrue, that as natural actions that are necessary to preferve the Species, of the Individuals are unixe with Tenfible pleafully fures,

fures, as an atractive to the performance of them; to there is joyn'd to actions of Vertue that are more excellent, anresent complacency of a superiou Order to all carnal pleasures. But is a frigid conceit that this is the ntire reward. For, first, besides the ward fatisfaction that naturally refults from the practife of Vertue, there is an excellent Good, that is properly the reward of the fupream Governor of the World. We have an example of this in humane Justice, which is an image of the divine. For those who have been eminently serviceable to the State, besides the joyful sense arifing from the performance of Heroick Actions for the good of their Country, are rewarded by the Prince with great Honours and Benefits. mort no dorqua as This

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2. This inward Joy is not here felt by all Holy rerions. In this militant state after vigorous resistance of canal Lusts, they may change Heir Enemies, and be all faulte with violent Fears, and infled of a fweet calm and ferenity atl into darkness and confusion. The Soul and Body in the present conjunction mutually lympathize. As two things that are unifons, if one be touch't and moves, the other untoucht, yet moves,

Tanta vis est and trembles. The cause is from convenientia, the Vibration the sound makes in sualem sponte the Air, and impresses on solid Bose movere fadies, moving them according to sociat, quia ejus dies, moving them according to sociam constat the harmonious proportion beagitatam, tween them. Thus the Soul and the Body are two strings temper'd

the Body are two strings temper'd to such a correspondence, that if one be moved, the other resents by an impression from it. If the

Body

Body be Sanguine, or Cholerick, Ch. or Melancholy, the Soul by a ftrange confent feels the motion of the humors, and is altered with their alterations. bi Now some of excellent vertue are opprest with Melancholy. Others are under frong pains that diffurb the free operations of the mind that it cannot without supernatural strength delightfully contemplate what is a just matter of content. The Stoical Doctrine, that a wife Man rejoyces as well in torments, as in the midst of | pleasures, that 'tis | Quare sapi-not in the power of any external laridis tauro evil to draw a Sigh or Tear from peruratur, him, that he is sufficient in him-exclamabit dulce est, ad self for happines, is a Philosophi- me nibil percal Romance of that severe Sect, tinet. Senec. an excess unpracticable, without Cordials of a higher nature than are compounded by the faint thoughts

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thoughts of having done what is agreeable to Reason. All their Maxims are weak supports of such triumphant Language. Tis true in a Body disorder'd and broken with Diseases and Pains, the mind may be erect and compos'd, but it by vertue of Divine Comforts from the present sense of Gods favour, and the joyful hopes of Erernal selicity in his presence hereafter.

3. Those who suffer the loss of all that is precious and dear in the World, and with a chearful confidence submit to Death, that, singly consider d, is very terrible to Nature, but attended with Torments is doubly terrible, and all to advance the Glory of God, cannot enjoy the satisfaction of mind that proceeds from the review of worthy actions, if their being is determined

of the Soul.

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love to God express in the hardest ch. 11.
and noblest service should finally destroy a Man, is not conceiva-

To render this Argument more sentible, let us consider the vast multitude of the Martyrs in th first times of Christianity, mor easie to be admir d than numbred It would be a History, to describe the instruments of their cruel sufferings, invented by the fierce wit of their Persecutors, the various tortures to destroy life with a flow death, fuch as were never before inflicted on the guiltiest Malefa-All which they willingly ctors. endured, with an invariable ferenity of countenance, the fign and effect of their inward peace; Nay with triumphant expressions of Joy, Now to what Original shall parably

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we attribute this fortitude of Spirit? were luch numbers of all conditions, ages, fects, induc'd by rath counsel, by frenzy of pation, by a defire of vain-glory, or any like caule, to part with all that is precious and amiable in the World. for Swords, and Fire, and Croffes, and Wheels, and Racks, to torment and destroy their Bodies? No humane Reasons, neither the Vertue nor Vice of Nature, Generofity nor Obstinacy could possibly give fuch strength under fuch Torments. This was so evident. that many Heathen Spectators were convince of the Divine Power miraculously supporting them, and became Profelytes of Christianity, and with admirable chearfulness offered themselves to the same punishments. Now this is an extrinsick testimony incomparably

of the Soul.

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barably more weighty than from the bare affirmation in words, or a meer content of judgment, that there is an unifeen state, infinitely better, and more durable than what is prefent, the hopes of which made them efteem the parting with all lendible things, meatur'd by time, not to have the shadow of a lois. And this was not a meer naked view of a future bleffednes, but joyned with an impression of that sweetness and strength, that confolation and force of Spirit, that it was manifest, Heaven defeended to them, before they ascended to Heaven. From hence they were fearless of those who could only kill the Body, but not touch the Soul. As the breaking a Christal in pieces cannot injure the light that penetrated and filled it, but releases it from that confinement.

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finement. So the most violent Death was in their esteem not hurtful to the Soul, but the means to give it entrance into a happy Immortality. Now is it in any degree credible that when no other Principle was lufficient to produce fuch courage in thou fands, to tender and fearful by na ture, that the Divine Hand did not support them, invisible in operation, but most clearly discovered in the effects? And can it be imagined that God would encourage them to lose the most valuable of all natural things, life it self, and to their great cost of pains and misery, if there were not an estate wherein he would reward their heroick love of himself, with a good that unspeakably transcends what ever is desirable here below? mondate designation of the control o

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Though Vice in respect of Ch. 1.1. is turpitude, be the trueft difho sour of Man, and be attended with regretias contrary to his Reafon, yet there is a further punishment naturally due to it. Malefactors belides the infamy that deaves to their crimes, and the fecer twinges of Conscience, feel the rigour of civil Justice. And Ino Physical evil be inflicted as the just consequent of Vice, the viciously inclin'd would despise the moral evil, that is effential to it, as an imaginary punishment. And when the remembrance of Sin disturbs their rest, they would presently by pleasant diversions, call off their thoughts from fad objects.

2. Supposing no other punishment but what is the immediate effect of Sin, the most vicious and guilty

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guilty would many times fuffer the least punishment. For the fe cret Worm of Conscience is most fensible, when vice is first spring. ing up, and has tender roots. But when vicious habits are confirm'd, the Conscience is past fee ling the first resentments of There are many instances of those who have made the foulest crimes so familiar as to lofe the horror that naturally attends them. And mamy that have been prosperous in their villanies, dye without tormenting reflections on their guilt. So that if there be no turther punishments, we must deny the Divine Providence, of which Justice islandeminent parton high flo the

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CHAP. XII.

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Is not polible for humane Two Arguments more to prove fuof ture recompenses . Tis not poss ble for Civil Justice to dispence Rewards and Punishments according to the good and evil aftions of Men. All Nations agree in the acknowledgment of a future state. The innocent Conscience is Supported under an unjust Sentence, by looking to the superiour Tribunal The courage of Socrates in dying, with the cause of its The guilty Com science terrifies with the apprehension of judgment to come. Tiberius his complaint to the Senate of his inward tortures. An answer to the objection, that we have not sensible emidence of what is enjoyed, and what is sufferd in the next life. Why fin, ble



The Immortality

a transient act, is punished with eternal Death.

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Justice to distribute Recompence exactly according to the moral qualities of actions, therefore we may rationally infer there will be a future Judgment. This appears by confidering.

That many times those etimes are equally punishe here, that are not of equal guilt: because they proceed from different sources, that lye so low as the strictest inquisition cannot discover. And many specious actions done for corrupt ends, and therefore without moral value, are equally rewarded with those wherein is the deepest tincture of Vertue. The accounts of civil Justice are made by the most visible

fible cause, not by the secret and Ch. most operative and influential. Therefore a superior Tribunal is necessary, to which not only sensible actions, but their most inward principles are open, that will exactly judge of moral evils according to their aggravations and allays, and of moral good according to the various degrees that are truly rewardable.

2. No temporal benefits are the proper and compleat reward of obedience to God. Not the proper; for they are common to bad and good: but the reward of Holinels must be peculiar to it, that an eminent distinction be made between the obedient and rebellious to the Divine Laws, otherwise it will not answer the ends of Government. And they are not the compleat rewards of obedience.

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For God rewards his Servants according to the infinite treasures of his goodness. The fensible World, a Kingdom so vast, so rich, so delightful, is enjoyed by his enemies. We may therefore certainly infer he has reserved for his faithful Servants a more excellent felicity, as becomes his glorious Goodness.

evils that can be inflicted here, are not correspondent to the guilt of Sin. Men can only torment and kill the Body, the instrument and less guilty part, but cannot immediately touch the Soul, the principal cause, by whose insluence humane actions are vicious, and justly punishable. From hence it follows, that supposing the Wicked should feel the utmost severity of Civil Laws, yet there remains in another World a dreadful arrear of misery

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to be endured as their just and full Ch. 12.

recompence.

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4. In testimony of this Truth, that the Souls of Men are Immortal to Rewards and Punishments, not only the wisest Men but all Nations have subscrib'd. The darkeft Pagans have acknowledged a Deity and a Providence, and consequently a future Judgment. Indeed this spark was almost drown'd in an Abyss of Fables: for in explicating the Process and Recompences of the last Judgment they mixt many absurd fictions with truth: but in different manners they acknowledged the fame thing, that there remains another Life, and two contrary states according to our actions here. Of this we have a perfect conviction from the immortal hopes in good Men, and the end-R 2

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less fears in the wicked. The directive understanding that tells Man his duty, has a reflexive power, and approves or condemns with respect to the Supreme Court, where it shall give a full testimony. Hence it is that Conscience so far as innocent, makes an Apology against unjust Charges, and sustains a Man under the most cruel Sentence, being perswaded of a superiour Tribunal that will rectifie the errors of Man's Judgment: But when guilty, terrifies the Offender with the flashes of Judgment to come, tho he may escape present sufferings. Of this double power of Conscience I shall add some lively Examples.

Plato represents his admirable Socrates after an unjust Condemnation to Death, in the Prison at

Athens

Athens encompast with a noble Ch. circle of Philosophers discoursing of the Souls Immortality, and that having finisht his Arguments for it, he drank the Cup of Poison with | an undisturbed Courage, as pane manu one that did not lose but exchange fuz mortifer this short and wretched life for a poculum, loblessed and Eternal. For thus he quatus oft, ut argued, That there are two ways non ad morof departing Souls leading to two rum in Cacontrary states, of Felicity and of lumvideretur Misery. Those who had defiled enim censebat, themselves with sensual Vices, and itaque diffigiven full scope to boundless lusts ruit, duss esse cesque cursus animorum è corpore excedentium. Nam qui se bumanis vitiis contaminassent, & se totos libidinibus dedissent, quibus cecati, vel domesticis vitiis & flagitiis se inquinassent, vel in republica violanda fraudes inexpiabiles concepissent, iis devium quoddam iter esset seclusum à Concilio Deorum. Qui autem se integros Castosque servassent, quibusque fuisset minima cum corporibus contagio, seque ab his semper sevocassent, essentque in corporibus humanis vitam imitati Deorum, his ad illos à quibus essent profecti facilem reditum patere. Tull. de Socrat. lib. 1. Tusc, quæst.

who by frauds and violence had been injurious to the Commonwealth, are dragg'd to a place of Torment, and for ever excluded from the joyful presence of the bleffed Society above. But those who had preserv'd themselves upright and chafte, and at the greatest distance possible from the contagion of the flesh, and had during their union with humane bodies imitated the Divine Life, by an easie and open way returned to God from whom they came. And this was not the sense only of the more vertuous Heathens, but even some of those who had done greatest force to the humane Nature, yet could not so darken their Minds and corrupt their Wills, but there remain'd in them stinging apprehensions of punishment here-

hereafter. Histories inform us of many Tyrants that encompast with the strongest Gards have been affrighted with the Alarms of an accusing Conscience, and seized on by inward Terrors, the fore: numers of Hell, and in the midst of their luxurious stupifying pleafures have been haunted with an evil Spirit, that all the Musick in the World could not charm. The persons executed by their commands were always in their view, shewing their Wounds, reproaching their cruelty, and citing them before the High and Everlasting Judg, the righteous Avenger of innocent Blood. How fain would they have kill'd them once more, and deprived them of that Life they had in their memories,? but that was beyond their power. Of this we have an eminent instance in

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non fortuna, non solitudines protegebant, quin tormenta pectoris suasque panas ipse fateretur.

in | Tiberius, who in a letter to the Senate open'd the inward wounds of his Breast, with such words of despair, as might have moved pity in those who were under the continual fear of his Tyranny. No punishment is so cruel as when the Offender and Executioner are the Tacit. same Person. Now that such Peace and Joy are the effects of conscious integrity, that such disquiets and fears arise from guilt, that incomparably exceed all that is sweet or afflicting in the World, is a convincing Argument that the Divine Providence is concern'd in

> the moral actions of Men whether Vertuous or Wicked done here.

> That the Righteous God has Rewards and Punishments infinitely above all the good and evil things of the present state; & consequent-

> ly that the comforts of Holy Souls are

are the first fruits of Eternal Hap-Ch. 1 piness, and the terrors of the Wicked, are the gradual beginnings of sorrows that shall never end.

Before I finish this Discourse it will be requisit to answer two Objections that Infidels are ready to make. 1. They argue against the reality of future Recompences; That they are Invisible, and we have no testimony from others who know the truth of them by experience. As Alexanders Souldiers after his Victories in the East, refused to venture over the Ocean with him for the conquest of other Kingdoms beyond it, alledging, facile ista finguntur quia Oceanus navigarinon potest. The Seas were so vast and dangerous that no Ship could pass through them. Who ever returned that was there? who has given Testimony from his

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own fight of fuch rich and pleafant Countries? Nothing can be more easily feigned that it is, than that of which there can be no proof that it is not. And such is the Language of Infidelity: Of all that undertook that endless Voyage to another World, who ever came back through the immense Ocean of the Air to bring us news of such a happy Paradife as to make us despise this World? do they drink the Waters of forgetfulness, so as to lose the memory of the Earth and its Inhabitants? If there were a place of endless Torments, of the millions of Souls that every day depart from hence, would none return to give advice to his dear friends to prevent their milery? Or when they have taken that last step, is the precipice so steep that they cannot ascend hither?

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or does the Soul lose its wings Ch. 17 that it cannot take so high a flight? These are idle fancies. And from hence they conclude, that none ever return, because they never comethere, but finally perish in the dissolution of the Body, and are loft in the Abyss of nothing: when they cease to live with us, they are dead to themselves. And consequently they judg it a foolish bargain to part with what is present and certain for an uncertain futurity. Thus they make use of Reason for this end, to perswade themselves that Men are of the same nature with the Beasts, without Reason.

To this I answer. First, though the evidence of the future state be not equal to that of sense as to clearness, yet 'tis so convincing, even by natural light, that upon far less

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less Men form their Judgments, and conduct their weightiest affairs in the World. To recapitulate briefly what has been amplified before; Is there not a Godithe Maker of the World? is there no Counsel of Providence to Govern it? no Law of Righteousness for the distinction of rewards? Are there not moral Good and Evil? Are Reason, Vertue, Grace, names without truth, like Chimaras of no real kind, the fancies of Nature deceived and deceiving it felf? Are they only wife among Men, the only happy discoverers of that which is proper, and best, and the All of Man, who most degenerate to brutishness? shall we judg of the truth of Nature in any kind of beings, by the Monsters in it? What generation of Animals has any show of veneration of

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of a Deity, or a value for Justice, Ch. 12 either peace or remorse of Conscience, or a natural desire of an intellectual happines in Life, and an eternal after Death? Is there not even in the present state some experimental sense, some impressions in the hearts of Men of the Powers of the World to come? These things are discernable to all unprejudiced minds. And can it be pretended that there is not a sufficient conviction that Men and Beasts do not equally perish?

2. There is a vail drawn over the Eternal World for most wise Reasons. If the Glory of Heaven were clear to Sense, if the mouth of the bottomless-Pit were open before Mens eyes, there would be no place for Faith, and Obedience would not be the effect of choice but necessity, and consequently

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there would be no visible discrimination made between the Holy and the Wicked. The violent in. clinations to fin would be stopt as to the act, without an inward real change of the Heart. If the Blas. phemer or falle Swearer were pre fently struck dumb, if the Drunkard should never recover his under standing, if the unclean Wretch should immediatly be confumed by a hidden Fire, or his finning flesh putrifie and rot away; if for every vice of the Mind, some Diseafe that refembles it in the Body were speedily inflicted as a just punishment, the World indeed would not be so full of all kinds of wiekedness, so contagious and of fuch incureable malignity. But though in appearance it would be less vicious, yet in truth and reality not more vertuous. For such

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kind of goodness, or rather not Ch guiltiness of the outward sinful act, would proceed not from a Divine Principle, a free Spirit of love to God and Holiness, but from a low affection, mere servile fear of Vengeance. And love to Sin is confiftent with fuch an abflinence from it. As a Merchant that in a Tempest is forc'd to cast his Goods into the Sea, not because he hates them, for he throws his Heart after, but to escape drowning. Now that the real difference between the Godly and the Impious, the Just and Unjust, the Sober and Intemperate may appear, God affords to Men such Evidence of future things that may satisfie an impartial considering person, and be a sure defence against temptations that infect and inchant the careless mind, and pervert

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vert the will to make a foolish choice of things next the Senses for happiness. Yet this evidence is not so clear, but a corrupt heart may by a secret, but essectual influence, darken the understanding, and make it averse from the belief of unseen things, and strongly turn it from serious pondering those terrible truths that controus the carnal desires.

3. How prepostrous is this inference? Departed Souls never return, therefore they have no existence, therefore we are but a breath of Wind that only so long remains in being, as it blows; a shaddow that is only whiles it appears; let our hours then that are but sew, be fill'd with pleasures; let us enjoy the present, regardless of hereaster, that does not expect us. Philosophy worthy of Brutes!

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But prudence will conclude if the Ch. condition of Souls that go hence be immutable, and in that place where they arrive, they must be for ever, it should be our chiefest care to direct them well: if upon our entrance into the next World Eternity shuts the door upon us, and the happiness and misery of it is not meafur'd by time, but the one excludes all Fear, the other all Hope of Change, 'tis necessary to govern all our actions with a fihal respect to that state. This is to discourse as a Man according to the Principles of right Reafon.

2. If it be objected that it seems hard that a transient sin should be punish't with Eternal Torments: a clear and just answer may be given.

This conceit in Men proceeds
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from a superficial deceitful view of fin in the disguiles of a temptation, as it flatters the lenles, without a fincere distinct reflection on its effential malignity. From hence they judge of their fins, as light spots, inevitable accidents, laples that cannot be prevented by humane frailty, errors excusable by common practice. Thus the subtilty of Satan joyned with the folly of Men represents great sins as small, and small as none at all, to undervalue and extenuate some, and to give full license and warrant to others. And thus deceived, they are ready to think it difagreeing to the Divine Goodness to punish fin so severely as 'tis threatned. But did they with intent and feeling thoughts look through the pleasing surface into the intrinsick evil of Sin, as it is rebel-

bellion against God, and the pro-Ch. geny of a Will corrupted by its own perveriness and pernitious Habits, they would be convinc'd, that God acts in a manner worthy of his Nature, in the ordaining and inflicting eternal punishment on impenitent finners. And 'tis observable that most dangerous effects follow by separating these two in the minds of Men. they confider Eternal Death without respect to the merit of Sin, they easily conceive of God as incompassionate, an enemy to his Creature, that is pleased with its misery. And fuch fearful conceits, fuch black melancholy vapours congeal the Heart and stupify its active powers, and cause a desperate neglect of our duties, as if God would not accept our fincere endeavours to please him, But if

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on the other fide, they regard their Sins abstracted from the dreadful punishment that ensues, they form the notion of a Deity foft and care less little moved with their faults, easie and indulgent to par don them. Thus the lengual pro fumer becomes lecure, and incor-rigible inhistorickedness. But we must consider these two objects as most strictly joyn'd; the Judgment of God, with relpect to Sin that alwayes precedes at, and Sin with respect to the punishment that follows it, in the infallible order of Divine Justice. And thus we shall conceive of God becoming his Perfections; that he is Gracious and Merciful, and loves the work of his Hands; but that he is Holy and Just, and hates Sin infinitely more than Men love it. Thefe are the two principal ideas we

we should form of God, with ref Ch spect rollis moral Government, and are mainly influential on his, Subjection For the correspondent affections in us to those Attributes are a reverent love of this Goodness and tender apprehension of his displeasine, the powerful morives roundbee us to the practice of Holines, and avertus from per nature a rebellious con cini?

be Now that the Divine Law is not hard in its Sanction, forbidding Sin upon the pain of Eternal Death, will appear by a due representation of the essential evil of Sin. This is discovered by conficor the valtuels of its guignirabo

1. The Glorious Object against whom it is committed Tis a Rule univerfally acknowledged, that from the quality of the perfon offended, the Measure and

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Ch. 12. Weight is taken of the offence. Now as the Nature and Perfections of God, so his Dignity and Majesty is Infinite, and from hence the transcendent guilt of Sin arifes. The formalis ratio of Sin is disobedience to the Divine Law, and the least breach of it, even a vain thought, an idle word, an unprofitable action, is in its proper nature a rebellious contempt of the Authority of the Wife and Holy Law-giver. Now that a poor Worm should dare to rebel against the Lord of Heaven and Earth, and if it were possible dethrone him, what understanding can conceive the vastness of its guilt? No finite sufferings in what degrees so ever are equal reparation for the offence. After the revolution of millions of years in a state of mifery the finner cannot plead for

made full payment for his fault, the rights of Justice are not satisfied.

If it be objected, that this will infer an equality between all Sins.

I answer, Though there is a great disparity in Sins with respect to their immediate Caules, Circumstances, complicated Nature and Quality, by which fome have a more odious turpitude adhering to them, yet they all agree in the general nature of Sin, relating to the Law of God, and consequently in their order to Eternal Death. The least disobedience has as truly the formality of Sin, as what is foin the Supreme degree. This may be illustrated by a comparifon. As the parts of the World compared with one another, are of different elevation and greatCh. 12.

nels; the Earth and Water are in the lowest place, and but as a point to the Celestial Orbs, that are above the highest regions of the Air; yet if we compare them with that infinite space that is without the circumference of the Heavens, they are equally distant from the utmost extent of it, and equally disproportioned to its immensity. For greater or less, higher or lower, are no approaches to what is Infinite. Thus there are several degrees of malignity in fins, compar'd one with another, but as they are injurious to the Infinite and Incomprehenfible Majesty of God, there is the same kind of malignity, and so far an e quality between them. Rebellion in the least instance, is as the fin of Witchcraft, and stubornness in the smallest matters is as Idolatry; that

is, the least Sin is as truly repignant to the Divine Law, as those that in the highest manner are opposite to the Truth and Glory of the Deity. And from hence their proportion to punishment is not distinguished by Temporal and Esternal, but by stronger or remisser degrees of Torment, by suffering the Rods or Scorpions of Justice in that endless duration.

Tis a vain excuse to say that God can receive no hurt by Sin, as will appear in a case of infinitely a lower nature. The counterfeiting of the Broad-Seal does no hurt to the Person of the King, but 'tis injurious to his Honour and Government, and the offender incurs the guilt of High-Treason, and is punish'd accordingly.

2. Confider Man's relation to Godas the Creator and Preserver, who

who gives him life and innumera. ble benefits, who conferrs on him the most shining marks of his fayour, and this unipeakably inhances the guilt of Sin against God, by adding ingratitude to Rebellion, the abuse of his Goodness to the ignominious affront of his Majesty. The degrees of Guilt a rife in proportion to his Duty and For Man then to Obligations. turn Enemy against his Father and Sovereign, to depraye and perven his Gifts, to deface his Image, to obscure his Glory, justly provokes his extream Anger. If in the Judgment of Mankind some hemous Offenders, as Parricides, the Affailinates of Kings, the betrayers of their Countrey, contract so great a guilt as exceeds the most exquifite Torments that the Criminal can endure, and no less than Death,

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Death, that for ever deprives of all that is valuable and pleasant in this natural life, is an equal panishment to it; What temporal Sufferings can expirate Sin against God? For besides the tranfrendent excellence of his Nature, infinitely rais'd above all other beings, there are united in thim in an incomparable degree, all the Rights that are inherent in our Parents, Princes, or Country, for benefits received from them. And may he not then justly deprive ungracious Rebels for ever of the comforts of his reviving Pre-Jence ?

fear in Men of offending God, makes the Justice of them visible.

For (as it has been proved before)

whiles they are cloathed with flesh



and blood, the disposition inclin ing from within, and the tempta punishment of Sin were not fa more terrible, than the pleasure of it are alluring, there would be no effectual reftraint upon them ots of the carnal appetite. Now if civil Justice, for the preservan on of fociety, wilely decrees fuch penalties for offerices as are tegullite to maintain the Honour of Laws that are founded in equity, either by preventing, or by repairing the injury done to them als it not most righteous that the Su-preme Lord of the World should Tecure obedience to his most holy Laws, by annexing fuch penalties as are necessary to induce a reverence of them in his Subjects, and to execute the fentence in full feverity upon presumptuous Trans-DITE gref-

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greffors? without this the Divine Ch. Government would be diffolved. Eternal Life, and Eternal Death are let before Men, to encourage them to Obedience, and deer them from Sin, To that, none dies but for wilful impenitence.
And can there be the least aspersion of unjust rigour cast on God's proceedings in Judgment? If it be faid, tis to contrary to the most inviolable inclinations of Nature, that no Man can choose his own deltruction; to that a full aniwer Lis true Man canmay be given, not develt Realon and Sense To as ochoole directly & intentionally Eternal Mifery, but virtually and by consequence he does. For the deliberate choice of Sin as pleafant or profitable, though damnable in the iffue, is by just interpretation a chooling of the pu-

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make it clear, that finners are in love with perilhing, let us confider.

The ineltimable reward of Obedience they refule. Tis a felicity worth as much as the enjoy. ment of God himlelf, and as durable as Eternity. Now what is put in the Ballance against Heaven! Only this World that paffes away with the lusts thereof. And it argues a violent propention in the Will to carnal things, when the little fleeting pleafures of Sense (how emp ty, how vanishing!) outweigh in the competition the lubstantial everlatting Bleffednels of the Spirit. And what a vile contempt is it of the Perfections of God, that such base things, such trifling Temptations should be chosen before him? Were it not visibly true,

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true, Realon would deny the pollibility of it. This as if the Wife
of a Prince should prefer in her
affections before him a diseased
deformed Slave. Or, as if one
should choose the Food of Beasts,
Hay, Acorns, or Carrion, before
the Provisions of a Royal Table.
This is no Hyperbole, no Exaggregation: but the reality, infinitely exceeds all Figures. And
is it not perfectly reasonable that
sinners should inherit their own
option:

Life by finners, is peremptory against the best and often renewed means to induce them to accept of it. They are allured by the sweetest Mercies, urged by the strongest terrours, to forsake their beloved hists and be happy. And till the riches of goodness and forbearance

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are despised, they are not past hopes. For though the fentence of the Law be decilive upon the first act of fin, yet is not irrevocable but upon impenitence in it. But when Sin has fuch an ablolute Empire in the Will, that no obligations, no invitations can prevail with it tis manifest, that obstinacy is an ingredient in the refusal of Heaven. And is it not most just that an obstinate averlation from God should be punish'd with an everlatting exclusion from his Glory? This will clearly vindicate Divine Tuffice, and render finners excuseless in the day of accounts. will overcome when he judges, and every mouth be stopt. This will be a fiery addition to their milery, and feed the never dying Worm. For by reflecting upon what they have irrevocably loft,

and what they must for ever suf-Ch. fer, and that by their own wretched choice, the awakened Conscience turns the most cruel Fiend against it self. In Hell there is weeping and gnashing of Teeth. Extreme Misery and extreme Fury, Despair and Rage, are the true Characters

of Damnation.

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by Sins in the present life, cleaves to him that dies in his Sins for ever. An habitual pravity possesses the Soul, and expresses it self in direful Blatphemies against the righteous Judge. And are not such polluted wretches for ever unworthy of the favour of God, and communion with him? Is it not most reasonable, the Justice of God should continue in its terrible effects, as long as the injustice of man remains invincible. Equum

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Ch. 12. est, ut is qui nunquam desinit esse malus, nunquam desinat esse miser.

CHAP. XIII.

What influence the Doctrine of the future state should have upon our practice. It must regulate our esteem of present things. And reconcile our affections to any condition here, so far as it may be an advantage to prepare us for the better World. The chiefest care is due to the immortal part. The just value of Time and how it should be improved. Tis the best wisdom to govern our whole course of life here, with regard to Eternity that expects us.

I Will now briefly shew what influence this principle of Natural Religion should have on our pra-

practice. Tis not a matter of pure speculation, but infinitely cencerns all. For whatever inequality there is between Men with respect to temporal Accidents in the present flate, yet there is no difference with regard to things future. Their Souls are equally immortal, and capable of the same blessedness, and liable to the same misery. It is most necessary therefore to reflect upon what so nearly touches us.

If the eternal state hereafter were not an infallible Truth, but only a probable opinion, and the Arguments for and against it were so equal, that the Understanding remained in suspence, yet the importance is so vast, either to enjoy for ever the clear vision of God, or to be cast into an everlasting Hell, that Prudence requires all possi-

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possible diligence in what-ever is necessary, to obtain the one, and escape the other. But this Do. Etrine is not meerly within the terms of Probability, but is clear by irrefutable evidence. And if those prophane Miscreants who endeavour by frigid Railleries to expose the serious care of Salvation to fcorn, and by trifling Arguments would fain weaken their assent to this great Truth, had not lost the humane property of blushing, they would be covered with Confusion, whilst they contradict not only what the wifest and best Men have unanswerably proved, but what their very opposition confirms. For the doubting of the Soul's Immortality, is a strong Argument that 'tis immortal. Because, only a spiritual Being, and therefore not liable to dissolution and

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and death, is capable of reflecting Ch. whether it shall continue for ever. It does not require fubrilty of wit, or strength of Reason to draw out the proper uses of this Dodrine, as Gold from the Mines by digging into the bowels of the Earth; but the Consequences are clear and sensible to all that will duly consider things. If in the next World there are good things and evil things, great, as the pollessing or losing an infinite Felicity, and lasting as Eternity, and distant from us no farther than Death is from Life, that is, than a lighted Candle from being blown out that is exposed to all the winds, tis absolutely necessary to regulate our selves in the prefent state by a continual respect to the future. As the Travellers in the Defart of Arabia, (that is all Sand,

Sand, moveable by every blaft, for that no visible path remains to prevent their wandrings) observe the Stars to direct them in their Journy to the place they intend. Thus we must look not to the things that are seen, but to things that are not seen, eternal above, to conduct us lafely thorow this material mutable World to Felicity. More particularly,

1. This should regulate our Judgment of all temporal things. Worldly happiness is but a Picture, that seen by sence, the false light of the present time, has an alluring appearance, but if looked on by Faith, the true light of Eternity, it is discovered to be a disfigur'd and unamiable confusion of spots. This unbinds the Charm, and difcovers the vanity and illusion of what ever is admirable in the eyes re.

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Ch. 13.

of flesh. Can any carry the least Ch mark of Honour, one farthing of their Treasures, any shadow of their Beauty, one drop of their Pleasure with them to another World? As in the Night all Colours are the fame, the Crimfon cannot be distinguish'd from Black, nor Purple from Green: when the light is withdrawn that gave them life, they ceafe to be visible, and are buried in the same indifferent obscurity. So in the flate after Death, the most remarkable differences of this World are no more. And is that worthy of our esteem that attends us for a little time, and leaves us for ever ? Can that be our happiness that when we die and cease to be mortal, ceases to be ours? If Man did only live to die, and there were an absolute end of him, present T 4 things

Ch. 13. things were more valuable in the chief of an earthly Felicity, as being his All; but if he dies to live in another World, and all that in the language of the Earth (full of Improprieties and moral Soloecisms) we call ours, must be left at the gates of Death, the entrance of Eternity, they cannot be the

materials of our happiness.

Seneca, contemplating the beauty and greatness of those Orbs of Light above, cast down his Eyes to find out the Earth hardly visible at that distance, and breaks forth into a Philosophical disdain; Is it this to which the great designs and vast desires of Men are confin'd? Is it for this there is such disturbance of Nations, Wars, and hedding of Blood? O folly, O fury of deceived Men! to imagine great Kingdoms in the compass is

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of an Atome, to raise Armies to Ch. divide a point of Earth with their Swords! 'Tis just as if the Ants should conceive a Field to be several Kingdoms, and fiercely contend to inlarge their borders, and celebrate a Triumph in gaining a foot of earth, as a new Province to their Empire. And from hence he Surfum inexcites Men to ascend in their gentia spatia thoughts, and take an intellectual possessionem possession of the material Heavens, Animus adas most worthy of their minds. But the Soul that raised by Faith looks beyond the Starry Heavens, how much more justly is it fill'd with noble wonder at the Divine and truly great things in the Spiritual World, and looks down on the lower Scene of things, and all that has the name of felicity here, as fordid and vile? The forelight that within a little while this World

Ch. 13. World feem ver the fenter looks
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World shall be dissolv'd, and time shall be no more, makes it not seem to be in the Eyes of a Believer that great thing, as 'tis represented to the rest of Men. looks upon those who shine in Pomp, and flow in Pleasure, and think themselves happy, to be as a Beggar in a Dream, that thinks himself rich in treasures: for prefent things are only colour'd with the appearance of felicity, and are as vanishing as the fictions of fancy. While carnal Men will believe nothing but what they see, feel and enjoy by their Senses, and embrace meer shadows as folid felicity, he confiders them with compassion. For 'tis with them, as with one that in the rage of a Fever, laughs, fings, triumphs. Tell him that he is not himself, he thinks you are mad for faying fo.

Tell him when his hery spirits (he shall be wasted, and that hear of Blood that makes him so lively and strong, shall decline and cool, he will be in extreme danger of Death; he replies he was never in better health. But who envies him that happiness which he feems to enjoy? none but one that is a mad-Man like him. Nay, a Father, a Brother, a Friend look on him with a mourning Eye and Heart: For he is only happy in his own conceit, and that conceit proceeds from his distraction. Thus the power of Truth is victorious in Tober Men, and does not fuffer them to be cheated with the false Thew of good that respects the Body. No credit it given to the appearance of Senle, when Reason discerns the Deception, and judges otherwise. And thus the clear infallible

Ch. 13.

Judgment of things present with respect to the Eternal Interest of the Soul. This makes a Believer preser severe Wisdom before the sweetest follies, unpleasing Truth before all the dear Deceits of sensual Persons.

In short, Faith removes the thick Curtain of sensible things, that intercepted the Eye of the Mind, and its first Effect is to shew the incomparable disproportion between what is present and what is future: and this is as great as between the living of a few years, and an incorruptible state; between the wretched enjoyment of things that cannot fatisfy the Senses, and the enjoyment of an universal Good that can fill all the defires of the Soul; as between an inch of Time and entire Eternity; bebetween Nothing mask'd with a Ch. 13. falle appearance, and infinite Felicity.

2. The confideration of the Souls Immortality should reconcile our affection to all things that may befall us here, so far as they are preparatory for our welbeing in the future state. The original Principle from whence are derived all Rules for practice, and of main influence upon our Comforts is, that Man is created for a supernatural happiness hereafter, and that present things are to be chosen or refused with respect to our obtaining of it. For the means, whatever they are in their absolute nature, yet consider'd as fuch in order to an end, are qualified and become either good or evil, as conducive to it, or unprofitable, and prejudicial. A Way

Way that is thorny or dirty, or steep or stony, is good if it leads me to my Country where I can only live happily. On the contrary, a plain flowry carpet Way is bad, that leads me from it. Now fince the present life conveys us to another, Poverty or Riches, Sickness or Health, splendor of Name or Obscurity, an high or a low Condition, become good or evil to us, and accordingly are eligible, as they prepare us for our last and bleffed End, or divert us from it. If the clearness of this principle be obscur'd, we shall stumble every step, and wander from the way of life. But duly confidered, it makes us judg of things as they are, not as they appear. This unravels the doubts of the intangled Mind, corrects the mistakes of the erring Eye, levels the greatest Difficulties,

ties, clears all the Objections against Providence, and makes an afflicted state not only tolerable, but so far amiable as it promotes our supream Happiness. Let us consider the two Worlds, the visible wherein we are, and the invifible, to which we are going, and impartially compare what is proper to the one and the other; the present and the future, the senfible and divine, the apparent and real, the transitory and perpetual happiness. And what reference these two Worlds have to Man, the one serves him only as a Pasfage, the other is his ever bleffed Country. Therefore what ever the present state has of sweet or bitter, whatever is defir'd or fear'd, as it passes with Time, should little move us. Who is there, unless disorder'd in his Mind, that when

when the Sun is prelent in its full lustre before his Eyes, rejoyces to have, or is forry that he has not a Candle, that he may see more clearly? And this life to Eternity is not fo much as a spark of Light to the Sun, and accordingly the Prosperity or Advertity of it should not transport us to an excels of Joy or Sorrow, but with an equal temper of Mind, and calm Affections, we should receive the dispensations of Providence.

3. How just is it that the Soul should have the preeminence in all

Quis nunc respects above the Body. The extremus Idi- one is the fading off-spring of the ota, vel que Earth, the other of an heavenly extraction, and incorruptible naercula non credit anime ture. When | Pherecides the Affyrian

Quod apud Grecos olim primus Pherecides Assyrius cum disputaffet, Pythagoram Samium illius disputationis novitate permotum, ex Athleta in Philosophum convertit. Nune vero quod ait Maro, Amomum Affyrium vulgo nascitur. Aug. Ep.ad Vol.

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first taught among the Grecians the Ch. doctrine of the Souls Immortality, his discourse so prevail'd on Pythagoras of Samos, that it changed him from an Athleta into a Philosopher. He that before wholly attended upon his Body to make it excel in strength or agility, that he might contend victoriously in the Olympick Games, then made it his bufiness to improve and advance his Soul in Knowledg and Vertue. And if the glimmering appearances of this great Truth were so powerful upon him, how much more should the clear and certain discoveries of it be operative to make us chiefly regard the interest of our immortal part.

The state of Nature requires, that Reason should have the supremacy in Man, and Sense should obey; but if the lower part tyrannises

over

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over the Superiour, and that which was so offensive to Solomon, to see Servants on borjeback, and Princes walking on foot, be verified in a more ignoble sense, 'tis the greatest degeneracy and vilification of the humane nature. Now the predominant Object discovers what is the ruling faculty. If sensual things have the Superior esteem and love, Sense reigns. And what a contumely is it to Man, when the Understanding, that was made to contemplate Objects of a spiritual sublime nature, is principally exercised for the acquiring of earthly things, and the Affections that are capable of enjoying heavenly delights, run with a full stream in the Channels of Concupiscence. As if the reasonable Soul were not for higher ends than to be the flave of the Body, to be imch

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imployed to digest the confused Ch Fhans of Meats and Drinks wherewith 'tis fill'd to give it a quicker perception of its pleasures, & keep infrom corruption for a time. If fenfual Wrenches could obtain what the unclean Spirits defir'd of our Saviour, when dispossest of the man in the Gospel, they would request in their last hour when they are ready to be cast out of the Body, permission to enter into the Swine, and wallow in mire and filthiness. This is an indignity equally dishonourable and pernicions. As 'twas faid of Caligula, Nec Servum meliorem, nec deteriorem Dominum, while a Subject none more obedient, but when advanc'd to the Throne, he became the Reproach of the Empire, and Plague of the World : So while the Body obeys the fanctity and sovereignCh. 13.

ty of the Mind, 'tis an useful Instrument, but if it usurp the Government, the Spirit is deprest in
the most ignominious Captivity,
and Man becomes likes the Beasts
that perish. Briefly the common
fountains of Temptation are Pleasure and Pain that affect the outward senses, and 'til the Soul has an
establish'd dominion over the Body, 'tis continually expos'd to ruin
by slessly susts that war against it.

The proper Business of Man is to purishe his Spirit from all Pollutions, to adorn it with all Graces in order to its everlasting Communion with the Father of Spirits. And though in this state of union with shelh, he cannot be always contemplative, nor exercised in the highest and noblest work, but must relax his intense thoughts by refreshing intermissions, yet all

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of the Soul

that is allowed the Body, must be Ch. I only to make it more ready and disposed for the Service of the Mind. But alas! the Soul that should be incomparably dearest to us, in respect of its preciousness and danger, is neglected, as the only despicable or safe thing belonging to us. Of the twenty, four hours in the day how much is wasted on the Body, how little is given to the Soul? as if all the time were lost that is spent on it, when 'tis truly gained. What an unequal division is this? Can there be imagin'd a more hurtful and monstrous profuseness, and covetousness in the same persons? If the Body be shaken with Diseases, what are they not willing to do, or patiently to suffer, to recover lost Health? Long and rigorous Diets to overcome some obstinate Hu-

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Humours, Potions distasteful to the Palat, and painful to the Stomack, Swearings, Bleeding, the Knife, and the Fire; to cut off the gangreen'd part, and sear the Veslels, and many more tharp Remedies tis counted prudence to fuffer, to preserve the life of the Body. And can that be preserved always? No. All this is done not to escape, but to delay death for a time. If we are fo follicitous that the mortal Body may dye a little later, shall we not be more diligent and careful that the immortal Soul may not die for ever?

4. This should make us fet a just value upon Time, and confecrate it to those things that are preparatory for the future state of blessedness. Indeed the present Life, though spun out to the utmost date, how short and vain is

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it? But as 'tis the price of Eterni Ch. I. ty, and our well being hereafter depends upon it, 'tis above all efleem precious. When *Popilius by order of the Roman Senate, required Antiochus to withdraw his Army from the King of Egypt, and he defired time to deliberate upon it, the Roman drew a Circle with his Wand about him, and faid, In boc stans delibera, give a present Answer before you move out. Thus Eternity, whose proper Emblem is a Circle, a Figure without end, presents to us Life and Death; that after a short time expects all men, and here we must make our choice. And shall a mortal coldnels possels us in an affair of such importance? We cannot so fast repair the ruines of the Body, but that every day Death makes nearer approaches, and takes away fome

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fome spoils that cannot be recovered, and will shortly force the Soul to leave its habitation; and shall we not secure a retreat for it in the Sanctuary of Life and Im-

mortality?

Can any make a Covenant with Death? Is it to be overcome by the strength of the young, or appeafed by the tears and supplications of the old? Tis equally invincible and inexorable. greenest Age is ripe for dying; the Fruit that does not fall, is pluck'd and gathered. Every one is under the same sentence, and so far equally disposed to dye. None can affure himfelf the continuance of a day, and shall we be desperately careless of our main Concernment? Shall we waste this unvaluable Treasure in idleness, or actions worse than idleness? shall

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we spend it to purchase transient Ch. I vanities? The gaining the whole World is not worth the expence of this Light of Life. Twas given us for more excellent ends, to work out our own Salvation, to secure our everlasting Interest. How should we redeem every hour, and live for Heaven? This is our chief and indispensible affair, and the neglect of it for a day, is of infinite hazard. Our leafon is short, our omission irreparable. If we could clip the wings of Time, and stop its flight, there might be some pretence for de- Cum celerilay; but the Sun drives on apace, utendi velowe cannot bid it stand still one citate certan-Our diligence in im-quam ex torproving Time should be equal renterappido, to its swift motion. We should nec semper, speedily draw from it what is bauriendum necessary, as from a rapid Tor-est. Senec. de brevit. vit. rent

Ch. 13. rent that will quickly be dryed up.

Twas a wife Answer to one *Plut. Apoth. that asked why the *Lacedembrians were fo flow in passing Capital Judgments; why so many Exa-minations taken, so many Defences permitted to the Accused! and after Conviction & Sentence, fuch a space of Time before Execution? The reason of it is, because an errour in that case is incorrigible. They might kill the Living, but could not revive the Dead. Now, fince after Death is inflicted on the guilty Soul 'tis loft for ever, how should it stop Men in the voluntary and precipitate Condemnation of themselves, by the wilful rejecting of the Grace that is offered to them upon their present acceptance?

To draw to an end; it follows from

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from what has been discourfed, he that tis the most necessary and highest point of Wildoni, to conduct our Lives with a respect to the Tribunal above, that will pals a fighteous and unchangeable Sentelice upon then, for all the good and evil done here. The Confequence is so manifest and palpable that nothing but perfect Madnels can deny. If there be a spark of Reason, a grain of Faith, the Mind must assent to it. For if Prudence consist in the choice and use of means to procure the Good we want, and in preventing the Evil we justly fear, certainly according as the Good is more noble and difficult, or the Evil more dangefous and destructive, the more eminent is the Wisdom in obtaining our end. Now what is the chief

The Immortality

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chief Good to which all our defires should turn, and our endeavours aspire? What are Crowns, Scepters, Robes of State, Splendor of lewels, Treasures, or whatever the Earth has in any kind or degrees of Good? They are only the little entertainments of the Body, the viler part of Man: But the perfect and perpetual Fruition of God, is the Bleffedness of the Soul, and infinitely excels the other. And proportionably 'tis not the loss of temporal things that is the greatest Evil, but the losing Heaven and the immortal Soul is above all degrees of valuation. Now 'tis strange to amazement, that those who profess to believe these things should live in a constant opposition to their belief. How vigorously do they profecute their secular designs? they build

of the Soul.

build Estates, and make Provisions Ch. 11 tanquam semper victuri, as if they were || Eternal Inhabitants here. || Omnia tan-But how remiss and cold are they quam mortain order to Heaven, and to escape le stimetis: the Wrath to come? Libertines are quam immoruniform and regular according to tales concutheir Principles; they are Infidels, de brev. vit. and live as infidels: there's no contradiction between their thoughts and actions. The remembrance of Death rather inflames than checks their Appetites to finful pleasures; as the sprinkling Water does not quench the Fire but makes it more fierce. They know they shall continue here but a short time, and resolve to make the best of it for carnal purpoles. But infinite numbers of those who in title are Citizens of another World, and declare their belief of a future state, yet are as careless to prepare for it,

The Immortality

Ch.11.1 as if the great Judgment, and the dreadful Eternity that follows, were Romanuck Fables. | They are Believers in their minds, and CHANGE THOUSE. Infidels in their lives. From whence : ritemetts of - mini mana comes shis montrous Compositi on of two extreams, fo contrary rales concupileitie. Sen. and difficult to be united, as the debrev. vi Sun and Darknels, tor Fire ! and Warer in their actual forms? For Mento believe there is a Heaven. and to be in love with the Earth! to believe an everlasting Hell shall be the reward of Sin, and yet to go on in Sin ? O the Touish Folly of Men'l What incloing Sorcery perverts them? and it because temporal things are fensible and present, and eternal things are spiritual and future? But how grace less and irrational is this? Has not the Soul perceptive faculties as well as the Body? Are notits objects

of the Soul.

jects transcendently more excellent ? Is not its union with them more intimate wand ravishing? Must the sensual Appetites be heard before Reason, and the Soul be unnaturally fet below the respects of the Body? If the most splendid temptations of the flesh are but drofs to the happiness of the Spirit, is it not true Wildom to distinguish and despite them in the comparison? Forthis end God has plac'd usein the World, that with equal Judgment we may ballance things, and preferring the great and folid Good before a vain appearance, our choice may be unconstrain d, and his Mercy take its rife to reward us. And how foolish is it to neglect evernal things because they are future? Is it not a common complaint that Life is short, that it flies away in a breath?

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breath ? and if Death be so near, can Elernity be for diftant? Befides do Men want an Understanding to forelee things to come? In their Projects for this World, how quick-fighted and provident are they, to discover all probable inconveniencies a far off, and lay the Scene to avoid them? And is Realon only useful in the affairs of the Body, and must Sense, that cannot fee an hands breadth beyoud the present, be the guide of the Soul? Well, though the most powerful Reasons, the most ardent Exhortations, and flinging Reprehensions cannot prevail with the Sons of the Earth now to be apprehensive of the evils that threaten them, but they live in a blind manner regardless of the Soul, yet in a little while Extremities will compel them to open their eyes. When breath?

When they are departing hence, with one foot upon the brink of Time, and the other lift up to enter Eternity, how will they be aftonish'd to see the distance between this World and the next, which feem'd to them so wide, to be but one step? The present Life, that in their imaginations would never end, and the future that would never begin, (so intent were they for the provisions of the one, and neglectful of the other) behold the one is gone, and the other come. Time is at their back with all its Vanities, and Eternity before their faces with its great Realities. How are their thoughts and difcourses changed in that terrible hour, that will decide their States for ever? they did foolishly for themselves, but then speak wifely for the instruction of others. How piercing and quick are their apprehensions then of Heaven and Hell, which before were neglected as unworthy of regard, or only touch'd the surface of their Souls? what amazement, what dejection of Spirit, to find them.

themselves in a sad unpreparedness for their great Account? the remembrance, that for the poor advantages of time, they forfeited Eternal Glory, and ventur'd on Eternal Mifery, cuts more forely than the pangs of Death. But suppose they harden their hearts to the last minute of life, and are more supid than the Beafts that tremble upon a Precipice, at the fight of extream danger, yet a minute after Death, (Othe heavy change!) when they shall feel themselves undone infinitely and irrecoverably, What fierce and violent workings will be in the mind? what a storm of Passions rais'd? But then Repentance will be with perfect forrow, without the least profit. There are no returns to the possibility of Mercy.

I will conclude this Discourse with a passage from the most humble and excellent St. Austin. He bewails, in his Confession, his long bondage under Sin. His carnal lusts adhered as closely to him, as the Ivy twines about the Oak, that there can be no sepa-

ration

ration without eradicating it, and plucking the Bark off the Tree. He felt an inward continual Combat between the Flesh and Spirit. He often shook the Chain wherewith he had voluntarily bound himself, but had not the resolution to break it. And thus for a time his Judgment abhor'd what his Affections were enclin'd to, and he was neither victorious nor vanquish'd. But when God was pleas'd by his omnipotent Grace to set him at liberty, the last and most violent Affault of the Flesh, and that which made his Conversion most difficult was this; His Youthful Lusts presented themselves to his Imagination, and as that

impure Mistris did with chaste Joseph, Ishook the Garment of his Flesh, and whisper'd, Will you renounce us? Shall there be a Divorce between you and your ancient Loves

|| Succutiebant vestem meam carneam,& murmurabant dimittisne nos? & à momento isto non erimus tecum ultra in eternum? & à momento isto non licebit tibi boc & illud ultra in eternum?

for ever? shall not this or that desire of the

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Senses be contented for ever? And what was that for ever? it only fignified the short remainder of his time after Thirty three years, which was then his Age. And this is the most effectual hinderance of the reclaiming of Sinners still. They will not be induc'd to make an irrevocable, unreferv'd dedication of themselves to God, and firmly to resolve never to taste forbidden fweets more, but always abhor the relish of them. But if it be so hard and intolerable always to abstain from unlawful pleafures, and much more to suffer pain in the short space, the moments of this Life, that it feems an Eternity to Corrupt Nature, what will it be in the true Eternity to be depriv'd of all Good, and tormented with all Evils, despairing of release, or quenching one spark of that terrible Fire? O that Men were wife, to consider their latter end, and the consequences of it, their Mortality and Immortality.

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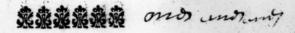
PROVED

By the Evidence of Reason,

AND

Divine Revelation.

By WILLIAM BATES, D.D.



LONDON,

Printed by J. D. for Brabazon Aylmer, at the three Pigeons in Cornbil, over against the Royal Exchange, 1677.

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The Divinity of the Christian Religion, Proved by the Evidence of Reason, and Divine Revelation.

CHAP. I.

Religion is necessary for the honour of God, and happiness of Man. Among the variety of Religions in the world, it is the highest point of Wisdom to consider which is pleasing to God. God alone is to prescribe the way of his Worship. He has revealed it. The truth of Christian Religion is made evident by comparing it with B



Christian Beligion

all other Religions. Gentilism convinc'd of falsity by its contradicting Natural Light in mistaking the objest of Worship, and in the manner of it. The Idolatry, the impure and frivolous Rites, the cruel Sacrifices of the Heathens considered. Philo-. Jophy was ineffectual to redress those evils. Judaism consider'd. The ceremonial part of that Religion contains nothing morally good. 'Twas of impossible performance to all Nations. Twas enjoyn'd the Jews for special reasons. The carnal Law was to expire at the coming of the Messiah, and give place to the Christian Religion, that is all life and spirit. The falfriess and absurdity of Mahometism discovered by the quality of the Author, and its nature; by the fraudulent and violent means whereby twas propagated; by the quality of those who received it, ignorant

proved by Reason.

rant barbarous Nations; by the qua- Chap lity of the Reward it propounds, neither becoming God to bestow, nor Man to defire.

Aving in some former Discourses establish't and clear'd the Foundations of Religion, I shall proceed to raise the Superstructure. That God is the Maker of the World; that he observes our moral Actions, and will require an Account of them in the future state, and distribute eternal Recompences accordingly, has been proved by fuch invincible Evidence that Reason cannot relist. It follows therefore that Religion is necessary both for the honour of God, and in order to the happiness of Man. For we cannot conceive, but that the wife Creator in making all B 2 things,

Chaiftian Religion

things, design'd his own Glory, both in the manifestation of his own Perfections, and that they should be acknowledg'd and reverenc'd, loved and prais'd by intelligent Creatures. This is a natural duty, to which Mankind with an unforc'd consent agrees. For, as Honour in the general is the homage paid to conspicuous Excellencies, and specially to beneficent Vertues; so Religion, that is the highest Honour, is justly due to God, the most Sovereign Being in all Perfections, and our Sovereign Benefactor. And 'tis equally clear that the happiness of Man depends on Religion. For if God regards the Actions of Men, not to have a naked speculative knowledg of them, but with an Eye of Providence and Judgment; if He will accept and reward our fervices

ces not as profitable to Him, but Chap as the just expressions of our love, thankfulness, and obedience to Him, 'tis requisite our prime care should be to serve Him. In this the greatest Duty and supream Interest of Men are inviolably united: for what obligation can posfibly be equal to that of pleafing our Maker and Preferver? and what is comparable to the Interest of Eternity? From hence there is a general inclination in Men to worship the Deity, imprest from the Author of Nature; but the ways are diverse. Religion changes its shape in several Countries, and the Rites that are observed by some Nations as facred, are rejected by others as impious, or vain. Now, in this variety of Religions, and every one contrary to the other, 'tis necessary to consider which is that

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Chap. 1. that special Way of serving God that is only pleasing to Him. If a Traveller be distracted between several Wayes, he will enquire which leads to his Journeys end, and not go on with uncertainty. And is it not infinitely reasonable to do that in the most important Affair, which any person will do in the most ordinary? To be indifferent in a matter so deeply concerning us, is prodigious above all wonder. For if the means we use to obtain the Favour of God, provoke his Anger, our misery is remediless. But alas! no rashness is so common, as that of Men's preferring one Religion before another.

How many false Religions are defended by whole Nations with that Zeal as if they were the most assured Persons? when the Foun-

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dations of their Belief and Adhe-Chap. rence are fo weak, that did they call Reason to Counsel, they must be convinc'd of their Errors. They are led by vain respects to their Progenitors from whom their Religion is deriv'd; and what they receive at first without discerning, they never distrust; As if the first Instructions were alwayes true. They relign up their Judgments to their Princes: And if humane Authority were a sufficient motive in this case, then every Religion will be faving in the Country where 'tis establish'd by Law. Nay the Christian Religion, though fhining with an extraordinary lufter, which justifies it to every one that will but open his eyes to consider it, yet is as injudiciously and carelesly received, as the vainest Religion in the World. Innumerable B 4

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chap. 1. rable are Christians in title, with, out any solid conviction in their minds, or divine change in their hearts, the effects of its truth and goodness. They are Disciples of Christ, as the Turks are of Makomet, by the sole impression of Example.

In the discussing this matter I shall proceed upon such Principles as are evident to the humane understanding. Tis a common Principle acknowledged by all Men, That God alone is to prescribe that Way and Order of Service wherein He will be honoured. For this Reafon those who in any Nation introduc'd a Form of Religion, always pretended to have Divine-Direction for it. Now that God has fignified his Will to Men in this most important Matter, 'tis most reasonable to believe. The Philo-

| Philosopher observes that such is Chap. the providence of Nature, that the Arift. Me most necessary Arts for the support of life are eafily learnt of all. In the rudest Ages men were skilfull to cultivate the Earth, to govern their Flocks, to dress their Provisions for food. But those Arts that were onely for delight, not absolutely useful; as Musick, Painting, Perfuming, Embriodery, &c. required more study and skill, and therefore were more modern. And if the Divine Providence has such a tender care of Man, as to make the knowledge of fuch things eafy, as are requisite for the Temporal life, 'tis reafon to believe he has not left him destitute of those means that are necessary for the obtaining Eternal Life. Now that the Christian Religion alone is true, will fully appear,

Religions, that upon trial are convinced of open falfity, or that they are infinitely excelled by the Christian in those things wherein they have any resemblance, or degrees of Truth and Goodness.

2. By confidering it directly, as to its intrinsick excellencies, and those External Supernatural Operations, that are the express Characters of Gods hand, which afford an infallible testimony of his approving it.

Before the coming of Christ into the World there were two forts of Religions, Gentilisme, and Judaisme. The first is utterly excluded upon the account of its gross and palpable contrariety to the Principles of sound Reason.

1. By a fundamental error in the Object of Worship. Idolatry then

then spread through all the Regi- Char ons under both the Hemispheres. Now tis evident by Reason there is but one true God, an Infinite Being, the Maker and Governour of all things, that has alone Divine excellencies in himself, and a Divine Empire over us, and confequently is alone worthy of Supreme Honour. And what greater indignity can be offered to Him, than the placing of Idols in His Throne? He is a jealous God, fensible and severe; and will not fuffer any parener in his Worship. His Honour is eminently concern'd to vindicate His despised Deity. 'Tis a pittiful shift to alledg, that they honoured their inferiour Gods with a lower and imperfect worship: for all divine Worship is supreme, and to be given only to the supreme God. Be12

Besides, what more debases Man than to consecrate the flower of his esteem and affections to unworthy Objects, and many times to things wherein were no figns of Life, much less any Ray of Divinity? Tis evident therefore that the numerous Sects of Superstition were involv'd in the most wretched ig norance of God and themselves. And 'tis observable, that no quarrels were rais'd amongst the Heathens about the feveral Gods they worship'd. For the Devil, the irreconcileable Enemy to God's Glory and Man's Happiness, was pleas'd with their deadly Errours. Let them adore the Host of Heaven, or of the Earth, it was alike to him: for they all diverted the minds of Men from the sole Object of Divine Worship, the true God.

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2. Gentilism was equally cul-Chap. pable in the manner of Worship. Those who made Gods to themfelves, ordained their service according to their fancies. But the true God that made Man will be worshipped according to his own appointment. Now if we consider that unintelligible variety of Religions amongst the Heathens, we shall have reason to conclude, that there is no instance wherein the excess of Man's native blindness and depravation is more aftonishing, than in the ways he has devised for the serving of God. This will appear by taking a short general view of the ways of Worship in practice among the most learned and polite Heathens.

The Grecians and Romans had Tanta Gentia more Art and Improvement than um in rebus the rest, yet how frivolous and ex-runque Relitravagant gio est. Pliu.

Magis ex alieno jecore Sapiebant, quam ex suo.

Chap. 1. travagant, nay how impious were their folemn Mysteries? The Eleusinia sacra, the rites of Cybele. the Floralia, &c. were mixtures of Folly and Filthiness. Their Auguries by the flight of Birds, their Presages by inspecting the ||Intrals of Bealts, and the Smoak of the Incense, were so fantastick, that if one had delign'd to invent things ridiculous without the least shew of Reason, it had not been possible to exceed them. They were very curious about Trifles, and careless of real Vertue: And what is more unworthy of God than to imagine that He is pleafed with little sensles observances solemnly performed ? They were afraid to foil themselves with imaginary pollutions, and insensible of the deepest defilements. Their most facred Mysteries were a covert for Un-

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Uncleanness, and under the mask Chap, 1. of Religion the basest Villanies were difguifed. But I will not rake Max Xavia in those links of filthiness. Now opyia. what is more impious than to ima woo perov, & gine that God is pleased with the To TUP, aimost fordid Lusts, that cannot be Maduti ounam'd without violating Mode- 18XE, Tas fty, nor thought of without defi- ελέγκε σου ling the Mind with their infamous 7, 164 XOV Ideas? But 'tis no wonder that such Clem. Alex. pollutions were esteemed Religi- Protrept. ous Rites, for they attributed to their Gods fuch actions as were most unworthy a vertuous Man. The Poets were the chief Doctors in their Church. Their tales of the Rapes and Incests, and secret Amours of their reputed Deities, were the rule of their Faith. And what a pernitious influence this kind of belief had upon them, and how dishonourable it was to their Gods,

APP OSITUS Ιεροφάνία. λαμπάδιας, Chap. 1. ver'd. It was Cicero's just censure of Homer, that whereas he should have raised up Earth to Heaven, instructed Men to live according to the purity of the Gods, he forc'd down Heaven to Earth, and made the Gods to live like Men in this Region of impurity. Tis the highest Glory of Man to be made the Image of God in moral excellencies, and 'tis the vilest contumely to God to fashion him to be the Image of Mans vicious affections.

Add further, that Man was a finner, and under the righteous displeasure of Heaven, all were compell'd to acknowledge by the Stings of Conscience. But what miserable work has been made from the ignorance and guilty fears of the Heathens, to render the Deity

Deity propitious, is manifest in Chap. 1. feveral inftances, and especially in their cruel facrifices of Men. This was their practise in extream dangers, to purge their Cities, and avert Divine Judgments. As if some eminent acts of Sin had the vertue of expiation. In short, the design of Religion is to procure the favour of God, and to sanctifie Man, both which are necessary in order to his Blessedness; but how in sufficient Gentilism was for these great effects is manifest. Nay, on the contrary, such a prodigious mixture of folly and wickedness makes it fadly evident, that the variety of Religions among the Heathens, were but several ways of dishonouring God, and perishing for ever. It is further to be observed, that the Philosophers of greatest reputation, admir'd as Oracles

Chap. 1. Oracles of more than humane Wisdom, did not cure these destructive evils. They should have exprest an Heroic Magnaminity (to which they vainly pretended) in relisting the dreadful torrent of Idolatry that everflowed the World. But they basely temporiz'd with the vulgar Heathen. Twas their declared Principle, that a wife Man should follow the Religion of his Country, and conform in his external practice with establish customs, if he referv'd his mind free for Philofophy. Thus they extinguish'd the most radiant beam of the Deity, and rob'd him of his most glorious Attribute, the Unity of his Effence. And by this we may judge how unfit they were to instruct and correct the degenerate World, and make it truly better, when they fuffer'd

suffer d Religion, the fountain of Chap all Vertues, to be corrupted, and the Worship of the only true God, the prime and chief part of Piety, to be given not only to inferiour objects, but to evil Spirits. Miserable Physicians! whose care was applied to redress some lesser evils that concern'd Societies, and neglected this mortal wound in the Heart. 'Tis a killing aggravation of their connivance and compliance with ignorant Idolaters, that they held the truth in unrighteoufneß; and when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, but chang'd the Glory of his Incorruptible Nature, into an Image made like to corruptible Man, and Birds, and fourfooted Beasts, and creeping things. This was the state of the Pagan World till the Gospel appear'd, and directed the natural religious incli-

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proper channel, to the only true

God.

2. The Religion of the Jews is to be considered. This the Christians acknowledg with them, was Divine in its Authority, Doctrine, Moral part, Worship and Promi-God himself was the Author, and confirm'd it by many illustrious Miracles. 'Tis deliver'd in the most antient authentick and venerable Writings in the World. It instructs us concerning the Nature of God, his Works of Creation and Providence, and the Judgment to come. It commands the love of God, and to serve him only, and the love of our Neighbour The ceremonial as our selves. part was a full conviction of the guilt of Sin, a visible discovery of the rights of eternal Justice, and a powerpowerful means to humble Men Chap before the Infinite and offended Majesty of the Creator. It propounds temporal rewards, as the marks of Gods favour sutable to the Church then in its minority, but under that Vaile the most excellent and eternal rewards. This Religion in its Ceremonial external part was to continue till the coming of the Messiah, and then to be abolish'd. To make this evident, I shall thus proceed:

tain'd nothing that was morally and unchangeably good, for then it had been obligatory to all Nations, and from the beginning; whereas it was prescribed only to the Jews, and after a long space of time, wherein many holy Men, though ignorant of that part of the Law, yet received a Divine testi-

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Chap. 1. mony that they pleased God. 2. Twas of impossible performance to all other Nations; as appears by the Precepts concerning Sacrifices that were to be of fered only in Jerufalem, and by the Levitical Priests, and their solemn Festivals so many times in the Year. Now the Worship of God being an essential Duty of the reafonable Creature, 'tis abfurd to imagine that it necessarily consists in fuch things that cannot be done by all Men.

3. God himself often declar'd that the Rituals of the Law were of no price with him absolutely

consider'd.

4. They were enjoyed the Jews for peculiar reasons, principally that by those imperfect rudiments they might be prepar'd for the times of Reformation. God had drawn

Isa. 1. Psal.50.

drawn in the Legal Ministration, Chap. numberless Images of the Messah; their Temple and High-Prieft, their Ark and Offerings, with all their Ceremonial Service did fignally point at him. diAnd this is aninfallible evidence, that a mind superiour to Moses's design'd all that Work with a final respect to Christ, that the Jewish Nation having the Idea of him always present might not mistake him when he should appear. And that heavy yoke of Ceremonies, with the spirit of servile fear that attended it, was to excite in them earnest longings after the Messiah, the Defire of all Nations, that with unspeakable joy they might receive him at his coming.

Now that the Legal Institution should expire for the weakness and improfitableness thereof, and 24

Chap. 1.

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a Divine Sacrifice be offer'd up of infinite value and vertue to reconcile God, and purifie the Consciences of Men, was declared whilft the service of the Temple was perform'd with the greatest Pomp. Thus the Messiah spake by the mouth of David, Sacrifice and offering thou dost not desire, my heart hast thou open'd; Burnt-offering and Sinoffering hast thou not required; then said I, lo I come; in the volume of the Book 'tis written of me; I delight to do thy will O my God. And the same inspired Prophet declar'd when the Levitical Priesthood was in the greatest splendour, that there was another order of Priesthood than that of Aaron, established in a more solemn manner, and of everlasting efficacy: The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

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Pfal.119.

That this Prophecy respected the Chap Messiah, even the Pharifees could not deny. For when Jesus Christ Mat. 22, 42. askt them whose Son Christ was to be? they answered, Davids. And demanding again, why David call'd him Lord, in those words of the Pfalms, The Lord faid unto my Lord, fit thou at my right hand till I have made thine enemies thy foot-stool? they could answer nothing. Their silence was a clear acknowledgment that the Messiah was the Person there intended. The Apostle also who Heb. 5.5. wrote to the Jews, takes it for granted by the universal consent of that Nation, that that Psalm respected the Messiah, and proves it was accomplish'd in Jesus Christ. Besides, 'twas foretold by the Prophet Jeremiah, that another Covenant should be made, wherein the real benefits of the pardon of Sin, and

Chap. 1. and true Holiness that were tipised by the Legal purifications and observances, should be conferred on God's People. Behold, the days come, faith the Lord, that I will make a new Covenant with the House of Ifrael, different from that made with their Fathers when they came out of the Land of Ægypt, I will put my Law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my People, And they shall no more teach every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother, faying, Know the Lord; for they shall know me from the least of them to the greatest of them, faith the Lord: for I will for give their iniquities, and I will remember their fin no more. In Thort, there are abundant Declarations in the Prophets, that the carnal Religion of the Jews should expire, and a Re-ligion all Spirit and Life should fucceed

succeed in its place, and be diffu Char fed among all Nations. This was to be introduced by the Messiah Thus Mofes forerold, The Lord thy God shall raise up a Prophet from a mong thy Brethren like war me; Him je shall bear was the lingular prerogative of Moles above the rest of the Prophets, that he was a Lawgiver, and Mediarour of the Governant between God and Ifinel, and accordingly the Messiah was to be a Lawgiver and Mediatour of a new Covenant Now if the Mosaic Institutions were to remain after his coming, the Parallel would not hold between them in those principal respects. Belides, twas prophelied that the Messiah should be a King sitting on the Throne of David, and commanding the Kings of the Barth. By which 'tis evident that his Laws must THOP

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must be of another nature than those of Moses, that were proper only to the Church whilst confin'd to the Jewish pale, but not for the government of the World. And whereas the Jews object, that some of their Rites were ordain'd to continue for ever. The answer is clear, That was only to diffinguish them from some temporary injunctions, that were of force on ly while they were in the Wilderness, for when they were inhabitants of Canaan, but were to be practis'd in all places, till by a new fignification of the Divine Will they were forbidden. And tis observable that in the Jewish Law the term for ever, when applied either to a Mans right, or to servitude, imports only a continuance to the Jubile: so that those Rituals were to continue in their vigour

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gour during that intire period, and Chap. to be determin'd after the coming of the Messah, the great Jubile of the World. And that Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah is most evident, in that his coming was exactly as he was defigned, and was to be expected; that he had the power of working Miracles to authorise him to change the externals of their Worship and Service. Briefly, Judaism now is but the Carcass of a dead Religion, and the obstinate adherers to it, are become so sottishly blind, as to believe the most prodigious fables, as divineRevelations. Their Talmud, so reverenc'd by them, contains intolerable follies, nay Blasphemies against God. It regulates his hours in the day. It relates that he spends three in studying the Law, and three more

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in the instructing Children that Chap. 1. In the initiation of the acceptance of employs three in taking the accounts of the World, and in the three last diverts himself with Leviatbans, and that the night being come, (for they imagine that the Sun sets in Paradise) he ascends a Charlot drawn by the fwiftelt Spirits, the Cherubins, and visits the eighteen thousand Worlds he created. I fhall not instance in any more of their extravagant tales, not to be defended by the pretence of solemn Mysteries, and by strained Allegories. This is sufficient to flew that by the Righteous Judgment of God, for their rejecting the Truth of the Gospel they are given up to believe Lies.

Since the comeing of Jesus Christ, Mahumetanism has overspread a great part of the Barba-

rous

fous World. But this carries in it fuch apparent and certain marks of falfity, that it can be no temptation to any person in whom there is but a spark of good. Hence, whether we consider,

was derived: a robber, one drenche in sensuality, and therefore utterly unqualified to be the revealer of the Will of the Holy God to Men.

2. The quality of its doctrines; fome are ridiculous and extravagant above the vanity of a feaverish dream: some are pernicious, flattering both the lower Appetites; the concupiscible, by loosing its natural restraints from exorbitant slessly pleasures; the irascible, by commending the violent oppression of others for the advancement of Religion.

3. The

Chap. 1. its rife and was propagated: It sprang from imposture; Mahomet erected an Oracle in his own Fancy, and prefended that the Holy Ghost descended there to give his inspirations. Thus he seduc'd at first : but having got a strong party, Force succeeded Deceit. The Sword cut its way through many Countries. And is it strange that the People so fiercely taught should follow the Religion of the cruel Conquerour? Thus it was planted, thus it increased, and is still maintain'd by the same causes.

4. The quality of those who received it. They were Barbarous Nations, and absolutely forbid to make an inquiry into the matters of Religion. And how easie is it to make an impression on the rude lump of the multitude? what wonder

wonder is it that pleasant follies Chapita. should usurp the belief of the ig-

norant vulgar ? als betwithin him

J. It promises in the future life a Paradile fit for Swine, most unworthy the glorious Rewarder God, and the excellence of Man. This is fo evident, that Avicen, a Saracen Philosopher, and Mahumetan in profession, speaks with abhorence of those dreggy low delights, and on the contrary afferts, that the heighth of happiness is in the perfections of the Soul united to God; and thus vertually condemns their Faith, as repugnant to the dictates of clear Reason.

CHAP. II.

The Christian Religion directly confidered. Previous Considerations, That (fort's



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That there was such a person as fefus Christ who converst in the World, and instituted that Religion, is most credible from the uniform testimony of Christians in all Ages. "Tis equally certain the Books containing the Doctrine of Christ, are transmitted without material alteration. The proofs of Christian Religion, though not equal in clearness to sence or science, yet are sufficient to convince unprejudiced minds of its truth. The intrinsick Excellencies of the Christian Religion confidered. The Doctrines of the Gospel illustrate Natural Truths concerning God, and reveal what is further necessary for his Glory and Man's Happine s. The intire Agreement between them. The Gospel discovers the misery of Man in its causes and degrees; and the means of his recovery. It represents a full and glorious Image of God's

God's Perfections in the manner of Charour Restoration. Therefore tis worthy of all acceptation. The Christian Religion sets before us a Rule
pure and perspicuous, in nothing supersuous or defective. The Promises of the Gospel are worthy of
God, and suitable to the wants and
desires of Men. They offer the
pardon of Sin upon the condition of
Repentance and Faith. The supernatural Assistance of the holy Spirit:
The supply of our temporal wants,
and support under Afsistions. The
reward of Eternal Life.

I Will now consider the Christian Religion directly in it self. It has this noble prerogative above the rest, the more one searches into it, the more its Divinity appears. Whereas other Religions may please a sudden Eye, but can-

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not endure a serious tryal. Some things are to be premiled.

1. Ishall suppose it as a Principle above all doubt, there was fuch a Person as Jesus Christ, who conversed in the World, confign'd the Christian Doctrine to the Apostles, and by them 'tis conveyed to us in the New-Testament. For in afferting it we have the uniform deposition of all that profess this Religion, from its rife till the prefent Age, and in all parts of the World. Though in other things of different opinions, yet they agree in this, that Jesus Christ was their Founder. Now who can better know the Author of an Institution Ecclesiastical or S cular, than those who were admitted into its beginning, and those who have succeeded in that order from age to age without interruption? Besides,

Besides, we have the consenting Chap. and constant testimony of Jews and Heathens, the obstinate oppofers of the Christian Religion, that its name as well as original was derived from Christ. We may with more Reason suspect, there were never such Philosophers as Plato and Aristotle, or that the Books which from their times by universal persevering fame have been attributed to them, were made by others and put forth under false titles, than to question what is so generally receiv'd concerning the Author of the Gospel. Tis the perfection of folly and madness to oppose such evidence.

2. Tis equally certain that the Books of the New-Testament are transmitted to us in their original purity, without any material alteration. For it is incredible that

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the societies of Christians should Chap. 2. the locities preserving incorrupt and intire, those Writings which they esteemed a most sacred treafure, on which they built their hopes of eternal bleffedness. It cannot be suppos'd they would transmit them to their Children, whose Salvation must have been dearer to them than the World, otherwise than they received them. This were to charge them with the most supine carelesness, and unnatural cruelty. Besides, the great number of Copies disperst through all places, and translated into many Languages, and read in all Christian Assemblies, make the attempt to fallifie them in things of moment to be morally impossible. This will be more clear, if we consider that among Christians there have been so many perlons

persons wife and good, of excel-Chap. lent learning and vertue, and of diverse Countries, that by their office were establish't the Depositories of those precious Writings. And is there any colorable pretence to imagine, that they should fuffer any notable alteration in them, much less conspire to make a change in any Doctrines of Faith or Life therein deliver'd? To give reputation and credit to a lye, intitling it to Divine Revelation, especially in matters of Eternal consequence, is such a black crime, that none can be presumed capable of, but one that has utterly loft his Conscience. I shall not here urge, that the Immortal Providence of God is eminently interested in preserving the Scriptures in sufficient purity. It were a vile imputation upon his Wisdom and Good-

Goodness, to believe that he would permit them to be undiscernably corrupted in points important to his own Glory, and Mans Salvati-Thus a snare would be laid without possibility of prevention, and the embracing Error instead of Truth would be innocent. But this Argument though incomparably the best, supposes that the Christian Doctrine descended from Heaven, the proofs of which are to be considered.

3. I will not infift on the proofs of all the mysterious points of the Christian Faith singly consider d, but propound the Arguments that evince the truth of that Religion, wherein they are exprelly and clearly contain'd, and from thence conclude that 'tis most reasonable to believe them. As in besieging a Town, the Assailants do not attack

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vigorously press on to possess themselves of the Citadel that commands the whole, and with that all the Houses are conquer'd. That Divine Revelation is infallible, is an acknowledg'd Principle by all Men: for natural Reason dictates that unerring Wisdom, and infinite Goodness, are essential perfections of God; so that he cannot be deceived, nor deceive those that trust in his Word.

4. The proofs of the truth of Christian Religion are of a moral nature; and though not of equal clearness with the testimonies of Sense, or a Mathematical Demonstration, yet are so pregnant and convincing, that the considering dispassionate spirit fully acquiesces in them. A Mathematical Demonstration brings so strong a Light that

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that the Mind cannot suspend its assent, but is presently overcome by the naked propounding of the Object: And hence it is that in Mathematical matters, there are neither Infidels nor Hereticks. But the motives of Faith are fuch, that although the Object be most certain, yet the Evidence is not fo clear and irrefistible, as that which flows from Sense, or a Demonstration. And 'tis the excellent observation of Grotius, God has wifely appointed this way of perswad-ing Men the truth of the Gospel, that Faith might be accepted as an act of Obedience from the reafonable Creature. For the Arguments to induce belief, though of fufficient certainty, yet do not so constrain the mind to give its asfent, but there is prudence and choice in it. Not that the Will

* De verit. Rel Christ.

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can make a direct impression upon Chap. 2. the Mind, that it should comply with its desire, and see what it does not see. It cannot make an obscure Object to be clear to its perception, no more than it can change the colour of visible things, and make what appears green to the Eye to feem red. But the mind enlightned by sufficient Reasons that the Christian Religion is from God, represents it so to the Will, and the Will, if fincere and unbiast by carnal affections, commands the Mind not to disguise the Truth, to make it less credible, nor to palliate with specions colours the pretences of Infidelity. And thus the belief of it refults from conviction and love.

This moral evidence is as convincing as is requisit to make us steadfastly believe and obey the Gospel.

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Gospel. Moral Arguments produce as fatisfying certainty, though not so palpable as those drawn from Sense. When there is a concurrence of Reasons proper to the nature of things, and the strongest they are capable of, by their united light they dispel all doubts and fear of the contrary. For after the Understanding has deliberately and impartially compar'd the Motives and Arguments in favour of the truth of a thing, and those that contradict it, and findsthe most weighty moments of Reason in one scale for it, and in the other nothing but Air and emptiness, it concludes without hesitation or suspence that such a thing is real. And as it is impossible that a Physical demonstration concerning the existence of a thing should be deceitful, becaple the two parts of a contradiction,

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diction, as of the being and not be chaping of a thing, cannot be true; lo there is as it were an equal repugnance, that a moral Demonstration, form'd upon the best Arguments the matter will admit, should deceive the Mind. It presents the object without a cloud, so that the Understanding has an undoubted assurance of it.

To proceed; the intrinsick excellencies of the Christian Religion will appear, by considering the Doctrines, Precepts, and Promises it contains, which are the essential parts of Religion. And of them in general we may observe,

1. The Gospel illustrates and establishes all the natural Principles of truth and goodness that are common to mankind, the rule of moral actions: and reveals all supernatural things requisit for the Glo-

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Chap. 2. ry of God, and the supreme hap.
pinels of Man, that rectified Reaion upon the discovery, must acknowledg it came from Heaven,
and infallibly leads those who believe and obey it to Heaven.

2. There is such an intire agreement between all the parts of the Christian Religion for the accomplishing its great end, as affords a clear conviction 'tis no humane invention, but from God. As the Harmonious Composition, the beautiful order, and uniform preservation of the World, is a sensible demonstration that it proceeds from a most wife powerful and good Cause.

In particular, the Doctrine of the Gospel contains besides what may be known of God, and of Man by Natural Light, two principal points: An account of the corruption and misery of man-

kind

kind in its first causes: And his Char Redemption effectually accomplish'd by the Son of God. The discovery of both is equally necessary to Man. The first makes him understand the depth of his guiltiness, that he is incomparably more wretched than he feels himfelf, clears the Purity and Justice of God in his dealings with Man, and prepares him by the afflicted sense of his condition for Mercy. And the knowledge of the Divine Redeemer powerful to reftore him, is as necessary in order to his Duty and Happiness. For without it he would be always tormented with the mournful remembrance of his loft felicity, and harden'd in dispair.

a full account of the depravation and misery of humane Nature in

its first Causes. The Heathens felt Chap. 2. an insuperable permanent discord in Man between the upper Faculties and the lower Appetites, but were utterly ignorant of the Caule of it. Now the Scripture reveals that Man in the original frame of his Nature was regular and holy, a piece of workmanship worthy the Perfections of his Creator, but he abus'd his liberty to break the first Command, which was given for the tryal of his Obedience. He yeelded to the inticements of a fallen Spirit, who was a Liar, that he might be a Murderer, and by his revolt from God lost his Holiness, and made a forfeiture of all the priviledges of his happy State. Thus the Fountain was tainted; and who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? By the offence of one Judgment came upon all to condemnatiproved by Realou.

oh. Every Man is now born a Chap. flave of Sin, a tributary of Death. From hence it follows, that the most deformed Monsters in villany, the most fierce enemies of Religion serve to confirm its Truth, as well as the most eminent Saints. These shew the vertue of Redemption by the sanctity of their Lives, the other the corruption of Nature by their obstinate wickedness:

2. The Christian Religion instructs us that God sent his own Son into the World in the humane nature, that he might offer up himself an expiatory Sacrifice for the Sins of Men, to restore them to his Favour. This is a Mystery above the flight of any created understanding; yet 'tis so temper'd and fram'd; there is fuch an uniformity of Wisdom in all its parts.

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Chap. 2. parts, it presents such a full and glorious Image of the Deity in all his perfections, that it causes the highest admiration, and commands belief in those who duly consider it. The whole economy becoms the Majesty, the Goodness, the Holinels and Justice of God. His supreme Majesty appears in his pardoning the guilty for the fufferings of another. For this is an infallible proof that he is above Law. And his inconceiveable Mercy is the only principle and fountain of our Pardon. For Man was absolutely uncapable to merit the Favour, or to repair the Honour of God, so injur'd by his inexcufable disobedience. Repentance cannot produce such great effects. What merit can there be in the forrowful sense and confesfion of that which deferves Etern al

nal Death? Besides, an extream Chap hatred of Sin, an ardent love of Chap Holiness, serious Resolutions to follow it what ever it costs, (which is the best part of Repentance) was due to God before the commission of Sin, therefore cannot be latisfaction; So that pure Mercy is the cause of our forgiveness. Moreover, God to glorifie his Holines in declaring his vehement and irreconcileable hatred to Sin, and to preserve the Rights of Justice, was pleas'd to appoint an all-sufficient Mediator, capable to offer himself an expiatory Sacrifice for Sin, and to give an infinite value to it. This was done by the Incarnation of the Son of God. The Flesh and Bloud he took of our humanity, was made Divine by union with him, and offer'd on the Cross was full payment for our offences.

Thus Justice and Mercy triumph Chap. 2. Thus June and Glory, being equally Victorious. For what is more honourable to Justice than satisfaction equal to the offence? And what can more commend Mercy than the most free and undeferved bestowing the high price requisit for it? Thus the Gospel affords to us a just and compleat Idea of the Divine excellencies in the Redemption of Man. The defign, manner, and the effect are most worthy of God. Where might such a contrivance of Wildom be fram'd but in the Divine mind? where could fuch an excess of compassion be found but in the heart of God? Thus it became God who is Love, to magnifie his Love, to advance his dearest Glory, and overcome our guilty difaffection to himself. For while terrible

terrible apprehensions of the Deity possess the heart its frozen with a stony rigor, which the hope of Mercy only can dissolve. Thus it appears that the Dostrine of the Gospel is worthy of all acceptation.

2. The Christian Religion sets before us a rule of life, pure and perspicuous, in nothing superfluous or defective, but comprehending the intire duty of Man. This was necessary in order to his recovery. For in his fallen state the Law of Nature is active in some things, but dormant in others. The best Morals of the Heathens are dasht with impure permissions. But the Grace of God that bringeth Salvation, teaches us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World. It forbids all Sin in all its degrees, not only the con-Sum53

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Chap. 2. summation of it in the act, but

the first conception of it in the thoughts, and defires. Which argues that the Lawgiver was more than a Man, having an inspection into the heart, which is only visible to God and only accountable to him. It teaches us to worship God the Supream and purest Spirit with the highest esteem, and with purity of affections. It enjoyns all relative duties to Men in a most perfect manner. What things we would have others to do unto us, supposing our selves in their circumstances, we are obliged to do to them. This one Law of Christ eminently contains all others that respect society. This is the primitive rule of commerce, and directs our carriage towards all perfons with justice and equity, kindness and decence. The Gospel also with

with respect to our selves gives a Chap. 2. perfect rule to make us holy and bleffed. It teaches us the contempt of the World, the valuation of Heaven, the restraint of corrupted fense, and the Angelical exercise of our affections. In fort, it commands the practice of all Vertues, and that we should aspire to the most eminent degrees in them. But especially it enjoyes humility and love to God, the foundation and perfection of all vertues, of which the precepts of Philosophy take little notice. Humility, that is, a lively deep sense that nothing is properly ours but fin and mifery, arises from the consideration of our absolute dependance upon God for our being, and all the benefits we enjoy in Nature or Grace. From hence gratitude fprings. 'Tis most reasonable that our

Chailtian Religion

our lives should be a continual Chap. 2. our lives mould be a containa, expression of Obedience from a noble and free principle of love to God, and be design'd for his Honour, and that for all our advantages temporal or spiritual we should only glory in him. In this Philosophers were very defective: They consider'd Man with respect to himself, or to other Creatures without him, and accordingly the product of their Precepts, was a certain moral honesty, to do nothing unbecoming the reasonable Nature, nor to break the civil Peace. But they did not consider duly his relation to the Creator, in phom he lives, moves, and has his being, from whom proceeds every good and perfect gift. And by neglecting him, all their glittering actions were but a weak counterfeit, a dead resemblance of real vertue.

In their most eminent publick Chap. works the praise of Men was their ultimate design; and as some ap- Nullam Virpear bold from Fear, they were cedem labo-Vertuous from Vanity. If God rum periculobe not the Principle, the Mo-derat, prater tive, and the End of what we bane laudis do, there are wanting the essential Ingredients of moral Goodness. detracta, quid Now all these Precepts shine with est quod in boc their native light, and carry luch vita curricuevidence of their rectitude, that lo, & tam breour obedience may come from an in laboribus ingenuous filial spirit satisfied with exerceamus? the reasonableness of our Heavenly Fathers Commands, and not be servile, only perform'd to the absolute will of a Master. And can there be a more convincing proof of the truth of Christian Religion, of its Divine descent, than the Image of Gods Holiness so clearly imprest upon it? Add further;

rumque desi-& gloriæ: quæ quidem tam exiguo vi, tantis nos

Cicer. per Arch. with that plainness, and so proportion'd to the capacity of all, and yet with that soveraign Authority, that 'tis reasonable to believe that God himself speaks, and it becomes Man to hear with reverence and submission. The Gospel is without the ornaments of Art, yet its sweet facility is temper'd with that Majesty, that 'tis a sensible caracter that Divine Wisdom compos'd it.

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3. The Promises of the Gospel are so worthy of God, and sutable to the wants and desires of Men, that 'tis perfectly reasonable to assent to their truth and goodness. This will appear by a particular consideration of them.

penitent Believers. And in this we are to consider the conditions, and the

The conditions are Repentance and Faith.

1. Repentance is a peculiar Command and Priviledg of the Golpel. The Law confider'd in it felf did not admit of it, not give the least hope of pardon? for it supposes Man in the integrity of Nature, and accordingly directs him how to please God and preserve his Love, but propounds no means of reconciliation after an offence. There are no feeds of Grace to temper its rigour. But the Gospel is the Declaration of Mercy to the guilty and miserable, upon fuch terms as God may be capable to give Pardon, and Man qualified to receive it. 'Tis not more true that God is the Judge of the World, and that all Men shall appear before his Tribunal, than that

that Sin without Repentance shall Chap. 2. that Sin Without Rep. 2. that Sin Without Rep. 2. To forgive the unreformed finner would stain his purest Perfections, the inviolable beauty of his Holiness, the incorruptible rectitude of his Justice. Such Lenity would have a pernicious influence on the corrupt World, by encouraging Men to Sin without fear, and outragioully to break his Laws in confidence of Pardon. Therefore in the Evangelical Promise, Repentance and Remission of Sins are inseparably joyn'd. Repentance is a preparative in order to our receiving Divine Mercy, and a strong preservative against Sin for time to come. The Remembrance of those sorrows and fears, the anxieties and indignation against himself that Sin caus'd in a true Penitent, will make him jealous for the

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the future of his Heart, and circumspect against all Temptations that may betray him. As one that has narrowly escaped consuming by Fire, retains the idea of his danger so deeply imprest on his mind,

ger so deeply imprest on his mind, that upon any new occasion his antient fears revive, and make him very watchful. Besides, the apprehension of Just and Eternal Vengeance, makes the Mercy of God so admirable, the sense of his tender compassion so sweet, that an humble Believer cannot forget or neglect it. The sorgiveness of Sin in this way is not only an en-

and good.

And Faith is a qualification as requisit for the obtaining pardon; that is, a cordial entire receiving Jesus Christ as he is presented to

gagement, but an infallible cause of fearing to offend a God so great

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minds to his Doctrines as our Prophet, to have reliance on his Sacrifice and Mediation as our Priest, to yelld universal chearful and constant Obedience to him as our King. And how congruous is it that all who receive so unvaluable a benefit as forgiveness of Sin, should thus honour him who procures it?

And the Gospel affords the strongest assurance that God is most willing to pardon humble and contrite sinners. This is necessary for the relief and ease of true Penitents. For when the enlightn'd Conscience resects upon the number and enormity of its Sins, the presumption in committing them, 'tis ready to be swallowed up with despair of recovering the lost favour of God. It

cannot devise any means how to Chap. 2. appeale his incented Majesty, and farisfie violated Justice: how a Rebel should become his Son; how one condemn'd to everlasting Punishment, should be restored to the unfading inheritance of Life. The case is most intricate and hopeless. Now the Gospel propounds means of Universal Sovereign efficacy to reconcile God to us; The most precious Blood of his Son offer'd up a Sacrifice to expiate Sin. This sprinkles all Nations, and in all Ages retains an undecaying vertue. This affords folid and everlafting comfort to all sensible returning Sinners.

2. The fending of the holy Spirit of God to renew us according to his Image, and to confirm us against temptations in this mortal life, 63

life, is another Promise of the Go-Chap. 2. spel, and most requisit to make us capable to serve and enjoy him. A happy temper of Nature, the Precepts of Philosophy, vertuous Examples, the severity of humane Laws, are not powerful to regenerate a Man, and transform him into a new Creature. They may restrain the exorbitancies of carnal appetites, but cannot throughly change the mind and affections. Were there any vital spark within, any feed of Holiness in Mans corrupted Nature, such assistance might cherish it; but he is dead to the truly Spritual Life, tho not to the merely Moral, and no less than an Omnipotent efficacy can produce a new spring of life, a divine Nature, the principle of willing Obedience to God. And after conversion, while in the state of tryal here, the

best are subject to innumerable Chap. furprises by their own frailty, and exposed to new dangers every hour by temptations that foment and heighten the reliques of Sin in them, to that without supernatural affiftance they would be quite discouraged and foild by the enemies that war against the Soul. Now in the Goffel God has promised to give the holy Spirit to those that ask it: in the most hazardous and difficult conflicts, he assures those who ardently address themselves to him for help, that his Grace shall be sufficient for them.

3. The Gospel contains many gracious promises with respect to Supplying the wants, and giving support and refreshment under the troubles of the present life. Temporal bleffings are in the lowest rank of good things, and are

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Chap. 2. promised as they should be defir'd subordinately to our chief good. First seek the Kingdom of Heaven and the Righteousness thereof, and all other things shall be added, saith our Saviour. And to relieve us in the troubles of this mortal state, the Gospel affuresus of their bleffed iffue at the laft. The main design of Philosophy was to reconcile the mind to every condition; that nothing might be able to discompose its tranquillity. As some high Mountains that ascend above the middle Region, whiles Clouds charg'd with Thunder break upon the fides, and Storms encompals it below, yet the top has a pure Sun, and calm Air. Thus the Philosophers pretended to raise Man to that height of vertue, that the superiour part the mind, should be serene and undiffurb d, what ever was done to his

his lower part the body. But their Chap. 2.
Principles were insufficient on which they built their Perswasion. Some pretended that Men were abus'd by words, and that was the cause of their misery. The loss of Estate, of Relations, of Health were not real evils, but only call'd fo. Sottish Wisdom! as if things by the change of names would alter their qualities. Call them by what soft titles you please, still they are injurious and afflictive to our nature, and to perswade the contrary is to deprive us of Sense. Others tell us that the evils we fuffer are fatal, and to refift inevitable destiny is to no purpose. But this is to exasperate instead of allaying our forrows. This is to turn our fears into despair, to make an afflicted condition absolutely uncomfortable. Others direct us to

Chap. 2.

look abroad into the wretched World, and compound a Medicine of the miseries of others for our own griefs. But this as 'tis vicious in its Principle, so it affords no true relief. For that another suffers in the same or different manner does not lessen the evil that oppresses me. Nay if humane affections are not extinguish'd, by a forrowful influence increases it. Others discourse of the vanity of Riches, Pleasures, Dignities, and Life it felf, to make us quietly to part with them. But this discourse, though true and useful, yet cannot afford contentment unless to a Christian, whose hopes extend to a future state of blessedness. For how mean so ever these things be, yet, if we know no better, they are our felicity. Some attribute to naked Vertue a power sufficient to Sup-

Support a Man under the heaviest Chap troubles. This they affirm'd to be the true Philosophers Stone, that purifies and exalts the basest Mettals, turning them into fine Gold; that enables a person not only to be content in every state, but to enjoy torments, and be pleafed with the greatest disasters that be- Vereor, ne ille fal him. But they took so high a plura tribuit strain, that humane Nature could virtuti, qu.m not uphold. The indifference and natura patiequality of mind they fo much lib.4, Acad. pretended to, was but an empty appearance. One might discover unquiet agitations under all that feigned intentibility, and true fervitude under that imaginary foveraignty of their wife Man. Indeed without the stedfast belief of another Life, the reflection upon unhappy vertue inflames the wounded Spirit, and kindles in the breast mur-

nactus, cum lectica trans_ ferretur, [utur dimotis plagulis Calum, mulquestus Eripi sibi vitam immerenti, negs enim extare ullum panitendum. excepto duntaxat uno. Sueton.

Chap. 2. murmurings against Providence. fo that 'tis fo far from making the Titus Imperator febrim afflicted happy, that 'tis rather the feed of new misery for the unequal distributions here. Christian spexisse dici- Religion alone affords us solid and everlasting comfort. It does not difguile the nature of things, but tumque Con- allows that present afflictions are not joyful but grievous. It doth not promise an exemption from misery: Nay it foretels that besides suum factum the common troubles that rain upon mankind, there are some proper to fincere Christians, to which they are expos'd upon the account of their holy Profession. But it affures them that all things shall work together for the good of those that love God. As in mixt bodies the Divine Power is admirable, in tempering the qualities of the fighting Elements in such a manner, that what

what in it self is a destructive con- Chap. trariety, becomes only a diversity, to preserve the compounded beings that refult from them. Thus the wife and gracious Providence of God makes all things, even the most adverse, to conspire for the final happiness of his faithful Servants. Their light Afflictions that are but for a moment, work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory. This makes them to pofjeß their Souls in patience, to rejoyce in hope, and to be triumphant conquerers over the greatest outward troubles. Who can dispute felicity with that person who is upon certain grounds perswaded that nothing shall separate him from the love of God? Nay that the worst evils he fuffers promoet his supreme happinels. For the afflictions that befal a Christian upon the account

Chap. 2. of Religion, render him more dear to God: and those that are the effects of his Sins, if humbly Submitted to, and improved for holy ends, confirm his Faith in the Divine Mercy. The Gospel is that Paradise wherein the Tree of Life is, whose leaves are for the healing the Nations.

> '4. Christian Religion promises for the reward of Obedience a Blessedness most becoming the glorious goodness of God to bestow, and the reasonable Creature to defire; that is, the perfection and fatisfaction of his most noble Faculties, in the clear vision and full enjoyment of God himself in a perfect eternal state. The Heathens wretchedly mistook in their opinions about the last end of Man. There is a secret instinct in the humane nature towards a felithe contact the

city sutable to the more excellent Chap. 2. and divine part, but stifled under darkness and concupiscence, that is become a second nature. Reason is misled by Sense after the fickle appearances, the deceitful vanishing colours of Good. And this is a certain indication that Man is fallen from the degree of his Original Perfection. For if he had been never corrupted, he should enjoy with affurance true & compleat happinels: if he had been always corrupted, there would be no glimmering Idea of an happiness above what this present World affords, no inclination towards it. This is the spring of his misery and sin, that the spiritual eternal good is undiscerned, unregarded, whilst he seeks for happiness in numberless vanities. The Philofophers themselves were extream-

Chap. 2. ly divided, and mistaken in this main point. This was indeed the master-piece for which all their Philosophy was defign'd, and their pretences to make this discovery gave them reputation. From all parts some came to Athens, as the universal Mart, to be furnished with felicity. From hence sprung the variety of Sects among them: by this Livery they were distinguish't. For Philosophy being the rule of life, is specified by the end to which it leads. From hence arose their sharp contentions, every Sect being concern'd to defend their Palladium. And as the Wasps fly about with noise, and sting those who provoke them, & make combs like Bees, but without Wax or Honey: Thus the Philosophers were full of glorious presumptions, were vehement against disfenters,

fenters, and had the appearances (hap. 2. of Wildom, but afforded no certain light to direct the Mind, no Heavenly motives to allure the Will. They were not competent nor fincere fearchers after true Happinels. For, I. The darknels wherein all Men are born, involved them, and without supernatural light could not be dispelled.

periority: every great Spirit was desirous to raise a Sect, to act the part of a King in the Scene of Fame. Now by propounding a new Object as the blessedness of Man, they had the reputation of

foveraign Masters.

7. They drew a Picture of happinels every one according to their different conceptions and defires. Epicurus set up the pleasure of Sense, as the chief object. And that

Chap. 2. that Reason might be flexible to his inclinations, that his Roses might have no Prickles, to prevent any melancholly reflections after carnal enjoyments, he denied the Divine Providence, and the future state. 'Tis faid by some in his favour, that he intended a calm and peaceful temper of mind, a felicity refin'd from the dregs of sensuality. For this they alledge Epicurus himself depreciating carnal pleasures, and extolling Vertue as the great compoler of the Soul. But in vain they wash this voluptuous Swine: For,

1. Those Sentences of a more noble and generous strain, might, as flashes of Lightning from a black Cloud, break forth of his Conscience in the midst of the darkness that cover'd it, yet Sense might be his predominent Princinla 2. He

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2. He was a crafty Spirit and Chap. 2. made use of some beautiful expressions to lessen the horror that his Doctrine, nakedly proposed, curus interwould cause in sober Persons. Sometimes he speaks with a grave air as a Philosopher, That true happiness consists in the pleasures of the mind. At other times, That praterea sit there is no folid happiness but what might be tasted and enjoyed by the Senses. He was a Polititian, and would not scandalise the fevere, nor alienate the disfolute from him. | Tully observes that the fecrets of his School, the pernicious fe babuiffe, lessons of sensuality were not communicated to all: But those who had intimate converiation with him, had a free indulgence for their lusts.

Aristotle places happiness in all the perfections of the Body and Mind,

Dulces voluptates Epidum fic extenuat, ut Curium loqui putes, interdum ita laudat ut quid bonum neget se posse sufpicari. Cic.lib.

Quedam arcana apud neg; se pernibus.

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Chap. 2.

2. Mind, with the confluence of all External things as necessary Ingredients of it. But this only respects Man in the present state in the World: and were his opinion true, yet his description would cause despair of obtaining that happiness. For how could any single Person expect an entire union of all such perfections in himself, as are not to be found in all Men together?

The Stoicks afferted felicity to confift only in Vertue. But this is contrary to Reason & Humanity. For the union of the Physical good with the Moral is requisite to give satisfaction to the faculties of man.

Sympos.

Plato and his followers, in whom Natural Reason ascended as high as in any of the Gentiles, had a glimpse of the true blessedness of Man, as consisting in his likeness to God and the enjoyment of him

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But their knowledge was shadowed with much ignorance, their hopes mixt with doubtful fears. They had rather suspicious and wandring desires, than solid apprehensions and firm expectations of it.

Briefly, no sparks struck out of humane intellectuals were fufficient to give light or heat, to direct in the clear way, and to animate against the intervening difficulties that hinder Men in the pursuit of blessedness. This was the state of the Pagan World, till Light and Immortality were brought to light through the Gospel. The quality of this life is therein revealed; 'tis a pure and holy felicity confifting in the perpetual exercise of the most excellent actions the intelligent Nature is capable of: That is, in the perfect Knowledge and Love and Praises

Praises of God himself. The sub-Chap. 2. ject of it is the intire Man, for this end the Body shall be rais'd from its dead sleep to an eternal Life. The place is the highest Heavens, fram'd by the Divine power for the seat of his Majesty, the Kingdom of his Love, wherein he will manifest himself to his Favourits. And can there be a stronger attractive, a more noble inducement to make us holy? Secular rewards, as Riches, and Honours, and the like, are extrinsecal to the nature of Goodness; and to do our duty with fuch low aims and expectations, is to be defective in the best part of it, the love of Vertue for its inherent excellence. But the Divine reward is the perfection of Holiness, the glory of the Soul; and the belief and regard of it has a powerful influence to make us truly

truly good. The Faith in this Chap makes us victorious over all the charms and all the cruelties of the World. For what can possibly come into competition with a happiness infinite in its greatness and duration?

I will only add, that though Heaven be so rich a Jewel, that it needs no foil to set off its lustre, to those who are clear sighted to be hold it; yet in a merciful compassion to Man the Gospel reveals what will be the recompence of wilful continued disobedience, an eternal Hell, wherein the Justice and Power of God are terribly glorisied. And what is more powerful to excite the sensual and secure, who despise the blessed hope, than the fear of an Immortal Death?

Now after this short delinea-

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tion of the Christian Religion, let Reason judg whether is the invention of Men. The Doctrine of it things with to clear an evid dence, the Precepts are so pure, able to inspire us with time Holinels, the Promises are so Divine, that every one who does not wilfully thut his eyes, or turn them to other things, may differents original to be from above what it comes from the Fountain of Will dom, Holines, and Goodness. What are all the productions of the Earth to this facred Present of Heaven ? If there be any shadow of Vertue in other Religions, here the reality is in the highest perfection, and separate from all vicious mixtures. Christianity enjoyns universal sincerity, and purity of Heart and Life. It instructs Man to appear what he is, by an humble "Ols

humble acknowledgment of his Chap what he appears, by an inward love and real practice of that Religion of which he makes a publick profession. It impresses a more not ble Character upon moral Ver tues, by enjoying them from a principle of love to God, and di recting their performance to his Glory, than Philosophy did, that commanded them only as agree! able to humane reason. What are all the most beautiful excitations of Philosophy to the high motives of the Gospell To apply our selves to the Writings of the wisest Heathens in order to our happiness, and to neglect the Scriptures, is to he guilty of worle felly than the barbarous Indians at Mexica, who | Pet. Mirt. though their Woods abounded Hift. Ind. with Wax, the labour of the Bees,

yet

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yet only made use of Brands, that afforded a little light with a great deal of smoak. Upon the most impartial inquiry, and exacts search, Reason will conclude, either there is no blessed end for which Man was design'd by his Maker, or the Gospel only has reveal'd it, and the effectual means to obtain it. So that we must say with the zeal and affection of the Apostles to Jesus Christ, Lord, to whom shall we gotthou hast the words of Eternal Life.

CHAP. III.

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The External proofs of the truth of Christian Religion considered. Miracles are only perform d by God. Why Christianity was confirm d by them. The number of Christs Miracles, the manner of his performing them, and

and their certainty, consider'd. The Chap Miracles done by Christ to confirm his Doctrine, are an authentick. Testimony that God approved it. The pretence of Libertines, that the Heathen Religion was confirm'd by Miracles, clearly disprov'd. The rational assurance we have that the Appostles were sincere and certain of the Miraculous things related by them of Jesus Christ. His Resurrection attested by sufficient evidence.

VVE are next to consider those external proofs of the truth of Christianity, the works of God himself, that seal our full assurance of it. I shall instance in two; Miracles, and the accomplishment of Prophecies.

work that requires an extraordi-

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Chap to nary Divine Power to effect it. Universal Laws of Nature, preferibed from the beginning of things and time, but the Author of it. Indeed we do not exactly know the compass of that Circle wherein the spirits of darkness excercife their power. They may by the application of natural means unknown to us, produce things that may aftonish, or by lying Wonders deceive Men: but a true Miracle is a work referv'd to God, and possibly to no less than Infinite Power. Whether it be a first or fecond Creation, the forming a new Eye, or the giving a visive power to that that was naturally blind, it can only be done by his hand. If we respect Omipotency, there is the fame facility; if the thing done, there is the same difficulty

probed by Reafoul.

culty in the performance. If the Chap Devits had Juch a power, they might create a leparate Kingdom, and reighthere ross barrent or

Now Miraculous Testimonies were given to confirm Christianity, that there might be a just correlpondence between its Doctrines and their Proofs. The mysteries of the Gospel in their existence are above all natural power, and in their belief above the natural understanding. All that Nature can do or know, does not make them credible. Therefore twas requifit those things should be confirm'd by the Divine Power, that transcend the comprehension of hu-Besides, as the mane Reason. Mysteries of the Gospel are sublime, so the Rewards are future; and that the Gentiles might not pretend that the Preachers of the Gospel feign'd

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another World, and a Heaven and Chap. 3. a Hell, wherein the Souls and Bodies of Men shall be glorified or tormented according to their actions in this life, supernatural Evidence of the truth of those Promises and Threatnings was necesfary. In short, herein the Divine Goodness appeared, That as the true Religion is necessary to the Salvation of all Men, so twas discernible by such signs as may convince all. For upon the fight of those Divine Works, the simplest people were led by the outward Sense, to an inward firm Faith in Jesus Christ.

These things being premised, I will take a brief view of the Miracles wrought by our Saviour to

give Faith to his Doctrine.

Tis recorded of Moses, who was a type of Christ, that after his

familiar converse with God, as a Chap Man with his Friend, descending from the Mount, his Face shone with such an excessive brightness, as it were by reflection from the Face of God, that coming to the Israelites to deliver to them the DivineLaws, he was fain to cover it with a vail: yet some rays of that miraculous splendor were visible through that mysterious Vail, to assure them it was Moses himself that directed and govern'd them according to God's Will.

Thus when the Son of God came down from the Heaven of Heavens to instruct the World, he shaded the light of the Deity with a vail of Flesh; yet he was not so absolutely concealed under his humanity, but that from time to time some beams of the Divine Nature appear d in works so proper to God,

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God, that the Apostle says, We saw bis Glory as the Glory of the only begotten Son of God. In the reptesentation of our Saviours Miracles by the Evangelists, we may consider their number and variety, his manner of performing them, and the

certainty of them.

Their number and variety. He went about all Galilee healing all manner of ficknesses and difeafes, even the most incurable; the Blind, the Deaf, the Lame, the Paralitic, the Hydropic, the Leprous, the Lunatic were cured. He rais'd the Dead, and caft out Devils. Besides his miraculous feeding fo many thoufands, his commanding the enraged Winds and Seas to be still, and a great calm followed; His Transfiguration before his Disciples, when the Beauty of Heaven descended on his Countenance to be there

the sensible Presence of the Deity in him.

2. The manner of his performing them is very confiderable. They were done in an instant, by absolute dominion over Nature. Thus when he faid to the Leper, I will, be thou clean, immediately his Leprofy was cleanfed. Thus when the faithful Centurion addreft himself to him, --- only speak the word, and my Servant shall be healed. He answered, Be it done unto thee as thou believest; and his Servant was bealed, &c. both expressions of Command and Empire. And his words to the Blind-Man, Receive thy Sight, had the same creating efficacy with those, Let there be Light, and there was Light. Thus with Authority he commanded the unclean Spirits, even the most furious Chaistian Religion

rious and obstinate, and they were Chap. 3: rious and oblunate, and they were expelled from those Mansions wherein they had revelled a long time. Thus by the mere Act of his Will he revers'd the order of Nature. When the Widows Son was carrying to the Grave, He only said, Young Man, I say unto thee, Arife; and he that was dead fate up, and began to speak. Now in this respect, the power of Miracles in Jesus Christ was transcendent above that that either Moses, or the Prophets, or the Apostles had. Twas derived to them by favour and commission from an extrinfick superiour principle, the Omnipotence of God; but 'twas inherent in his Person, the natural proper Attribute of his Deity, and prov'd Him to be the Son of God, the Lord of Nature, visible in humane flesh. In all places this

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The certainty of his performing them was fo great, that no shadow of suspicion could remain about it. Vitruvius the Mafler of Architects gives advice to those who built Temples to Afcu- Cum enim ex lapius, or any other of the Heathen Pestilenti in Deities that were invocated by the falubrem lo-Sick, that they should choose such places as were open to the most ta fuerint, & favourable Aspects and Influences (alubribus aof the Heavens, where there was a quarum usus well-temper'd Soil, clear Air, pure fub ministra-Springs of Water, that Diseased- rius convales-Persons coming from unhealthy- cent. Ita effplaces might obtain Recovery; natura loci and what was the benefit of Na- majores, auture might be attributed to the dignitate Di-Divine Vertue of A sculapius. Thus vinitas excithat Idolater counsel'd for the ho- piat opinionour of his false Gods. But in cap. 2. this

cum corpora egra translaà Fontibus. buntur, cele_ cietur, ut ex

Christian Religion

this he judged aright, that the power of the Deity was believed and honoured by Men proportionably to the Cures that were received from him. How much more when done by an undoubted Miracle? Of this the People the numerous spectators were for convinc'd, that they faid, When & brift comest, the expected Deliverer, will he chirs corpora do more Miracles than thefe which this la fairting Man has done? The Phanifees themferves could not deny the Effects, but would not acknowledg the crue Caufe. Envy was more poweiful in their breafts, than the clearest Evidence. 3 Therefore to invalidate his Authority, they afcrib'd forme of his wonderful works to the Prince of Devil. But this pretence was fo void of all Reason, and full of impiety, that nothing but inveterate malice could

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could suggest it. For would the Chap. Devil destroy his own Kingdom? is he such a lover of Holiness as to authorise the most perfect Master of it by a compliance with his Will ? Those proud Spirits are fervile only in appearance, and when they fuffer themselves to be commanded by Men, tis always with design to establish and increase their own Dominion. Therefore the most famous Sorcerers obferve someRites by the Devil's prescription, and in the using of them acknowledg his power. To But our Saviour had a Toveraign Empire over them, and ejected them not only from the Bodies, but from the Souls of Men, Jubduing by his holy Doctrine the power of Sin wherein the Kingdom of Saran consists. From hence he argues, If I by the finger of God cast our Devils,

wils, then is the Kingdom of God come unto you. And hence it was, that he charges them with self-condemning obstinancy. For if the Gentiles were inexcusable for not acknowledging and honouring God, so clearly manifested in the Works of Nature, The Jews were as inexcusable, for rejecting Jesus Christ, so powerfully declared to be the Son of God by supernatural Operations.

Add further, that in his lowest state when he seemd to be utterly forsaken of God, yet then his Innocency and the Divinity of his Person were miraculously testified: For at his Death, even insensible Nature as if it had been capable of Knowledg and Assection, was in the most astonishing disorder, as resenting the Passon of its Lord. The Sun was eclips d in a

time :

time and place against all possibi-Chap. lity of Nature. For the Moon was then in opposition to it and in its Full, and in an instant past a That Eclipse half Circle of the Heavens to in- sed in some terpose between the body of the other extra-Sun and the Earth, that the Air at known mannoon day was darkn'd as at mid-ner. night. This compell'd the Roman Centurion to acknowledg that he that suffer'd was the Son of God. And his Resurrection from the Grave was a visible Argument to confirm his Doctrine; for that God would not exert his extraordinary power to confirm a false Doctrine, in a matter of infinite moment, that so nearly concerns his own Glory, and the Salvation of Men, there is sufficient assurance from his Wisdom, Truth & Goodness. Was there ever any Prince that would permit an Usurper, in

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his own Presence to make use of his Royal Seal, to authorife by Commission his Subjects to rebel against him? And would God have suffered a Deceiver to work Miracles, and thereby obtain Divine Honour from Men, the incommunicable Right of the Deity? Nay, it had not been a bare permission, but a positive Act of God himself, it being impossible that any other should do them. Or, would God who is the prime Verity, work Miracles to give credit to a Lye, and violate the Honour of his Eternal, most perfect Veracity? Or, is it confiftent with his Infinite Goodness, to make a Delufion fo strong, that the most fincere would be in great danger to be overcome by it? Therefore the Apostle urges it as an uncontroulable Argument of our Saviour's Divine

Divine Mission; Te Men of Israel hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you, by Miraeles and Wonders, and Signs which God did by him in the midst of you, as you your selves also know. These were proofs of the greatest vigour, to induce the World to believe that he came from God, to make known his Counsel for the recovery of lost undone Mankind.

Tis said by Libertines, that the Heathens tell miraculous stories to confirm their Religion, that their Hero's descended in a right line from some Deity; and not to instance in many particulars, they boasted of Apollonius Tyanaus as one that vied with Christ himself in wonderful works. But this Objection is easily refuted: for if Paganism had a miraculous Power

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attending it, why did it not make use of it to discredit that Power that authoris'd Christianity in the time it made sierce War against it? If equal to it in Divine Power, and incomparably superiour in humane aids, how came it to pass that the weaker prov'd victorious, and the stronger was put to slight? Tis evident therefore the pretended Miracles of Paganism, were works of the Devil, not to be compar'd with what was done by an Almighty Hand.

If it be again objected, That the relation of the Miracles as perform'd by Jesus Christ is from his Disciples, who favoured his Person and Cause, and therefore may be justly suspected. I answer; The vanity of the Pretence is apparent: for if they had artisticially fram'd a Narrative of extraordi-

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nary things as done by him in that Chap time wherein they wrote, and in the view of many, how easy had it been to expose them to the just forn and hatred of all for their notorious falshood, and infatuated Impudence? but they were never accus'd of this. Nay such was the number, clearness, and great ness of his Miracles, that the uncontrouled fame of them forc'd his Enemies in after-Ages to acknowledg their truth. The Jews in their Talmud confess he did Wonders, but give such a ridiculous Account of the Means by which they were done, as betrays the weakness of their Reason, and the strength of their Malice against him. And his Apostles, with their Successors, in preaching the Gospel, wrought Miracles so frequently in the face of many Nations,

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nately averse from submitting to it, could not deny what was visible to thousands, and that Miraculous Power they always ascribed to the Name of CHRIST. So that there is no colour for jealousy, as if his Miracles recorded in the Go-

spel were not true.

But because the Resurrection of Christ is the great Principle upon which all Christian hopes depend, I will shew that we have all the rational assurance of it, that it is capable of. This being a matter of fact done many Ages past, is to be proved by Testimony. And first, 'tis worthy of Observation that the Providence of God is concern'd to authorize this manner of proof, that is absolutely necessary for the preserving humane Societies. 'Tis of little importance, whether

whether the truth of things be dif- Chap. covered in speculative Sciences, or the appearance of it deceive the Inquirer da Tis no wrong to the Commonwealth, that an Astronomer mistakes in his dimensions of the magnitude of the Sun; for his errour does not lessen its benign influences; still it shines and causes the Spring and Autumn. 'Tis of little importance that a Philosopher is deceiv'd in his fearch after the principles of mixt bodies: for, notwithstanding his mistake, Animals still live, and move, and perform all the Functions futable to their Nature. But in Judgments that respect matters of Fact, if the Truth cannot be known by testimonys, the civil felicity cannot long subsist. For the unjust distribution of Rewards and Punishments is necessarily ruinous to the Being H 4

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Being of the State. And is it credible the Divine Providence that reaches to the smallest parts of the World in such an admirable manner, should leave the conduct of humane affairs, even of the greatest moment, to a deceitful Light? And that after the most diligent fearch and caution has been used, the refult should be only wavering Conjectures? This imagination is extreamly injurious to his Wisdom and Goodness.

In particular, if we consider the Number and the Quality of the Witnesses of Christ's Resurrection, and the Circumstances of their Testimony, we shall have so clear conviction of its truth as may induce us most firmly to believe it. I do not now speak of a Divine Faith, that supernatural Light that makes us acquiesce in things be-

cause

of a rational humane Faith, grounded on just and powerful motives, which is preparatory for the Divine.

1. The Law admits two Witnesses as a competent number in Causes of greatest moment. Of this there were many. The approved Integrity of a Witne & gives weight to his Testimony: as on the contrary a known Lyar forfeits his Credit fo entirely, that he is not believed when he speaks true. When Demades the Orator addrest himself to the Athenians, I call all the Gods and Goddesses to witness the truth of what I shall say: The Athenians often abused by his impudent Lyes, presently interrupted him, And we call all the Gods and Goddesses to witness we will not believe you. The bare word of an Honest Man

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Man in an important matter, perwades more than the most exquifite Oaths and far-fetch'd Imprecations, by which a Lyar would give credit to his Imposture. Now we have strong proof of the Integrity of the Apostles. If an inflexible Fidelity and constant Truth were qualities so remarkable in the Community of the Primitive Christians, that the Pagan * Judges themselves were constrained to acknowledg it, certainly they were found more eminently in those by whose Doctrine and Example they form'd themselves. And as it is impossible to possess this Vertue (so strictly united to Justice) in an excellent degree, without having all the others; so 'tis evident they were adorn'd with all moral Vertues. For their lives were above the least reproach and charge

* Plin. in Epist.

of their implacable enemies: so Chapethat they were fain to make express Laws against their Profession, to render them guilty in Appearance. Besides, the circumstances of their Testimony make it very valuable.

1. Twas not built on the report of others. Mere hear-say is very deceitful, and often like a Contagion passes from Ear to Ear, and blafts the Reputation of the Innocent with eafy and credulous persons. But a Testimony from fight makes impression on the belief of wife confidering Men. Now we have undoubted Affurance of Christ's Resurrection from the clear and concurrent deposition of their Senses: What we have heard, and what we have seen with our eyes, and what we have handled of the Word of Life, saith the Apostle St. John. 2. The

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timony renders it convincing. If any material contradiction be between Witnesses, its an infallible mark of their Forgery. But the Apostles agreed not only in the substance, but in the particularity of the Fact. In vain Porphiry and Julian rack'd their Wits to find some contrariety in their Relations. An impartial Inquirer must acknowledge all their Objections to be mere Cavils, and effects of Malice.

3. There were no motives to corrupt them. For the humane will is naturally moved either by attraction of some Good, or aversion from some Evil. A Fiction is not maintain'd for pure love of it self, but with respect to either of those objects whether real or in appearance. The Roman Histo-

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ries report that Julius Proculus so- Chap. lemnly swore that he saw Romalus ascend to Heaven: but the motive of his Imposture is visible; for it was to prevent a great disorder among the People. But 'tis very evident that nothing defirable in the World had the least influence upon the Apostles. Nay on the contrary, whatever was terrible to Nature, discourag'd them. They fuffer'd all temporal evils, even Death it self, for this Testimony. And this last proof confirms all the others; They are called Martyrs by way of excellency, who have feal'd the Truth with their Blood. Now what can be added to give us full and entire Faith in their Testimony? In great and difficult Cases, suspected Persons are put to Torture for the difcovery of Truth. The Apostles were

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were tryed by the Tharpest Suffer. ings, yet declar'd the Resurrection of their Divine Master with unfainting perseverance. What shadow of doubt can remain after fuch clear evidence of their fincerity? Let sober Reason judge: whether the matter is capable of proof more strong and convincing? If it be faid they were deceived with an Illufion, either being distemper'd or in a dream; both the presences are most absur'd and incredible. For the operations of the ExternalSenses may be infallibly discern'd by their proper caracters from those of the Imaginations. Indeed, if the mind be in disorder, either from some more fixed and tenacious cause, or from sleep, the influences of Reason are suspended, or only some faint rays appear, and are fuddenly extingush'd, so that

that it can make no true judgment Chap. of things. In this ftate, the Imagination draws all the vigour of the Soul to it felf, and the Phantasms are made so bright by the heat of the Spirits in the brain, that those painted Scenes seem to be as real as the substantial objects we fee, hear, and touch. But found Reason can reflect upon it self, and extend its veiw to the operations of all the other faculties, and observe the just and certain difference between Chimeras in the imagination, and things really existant. It comprehends distinctly and with affurance, that it is not disturb'd, and that the Internal and External Senses are dispos'd for their regular operations. It considers that the Pageants of Fancy moving in a dream vanish in a moment upon waking. But real effects

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fects perceiv'd by the Senses in their full exercise are more constant and durable. One may be wounded in a dream, yet feel not loss of blood or strength when he is awake. But the wounds received in a Combat are sometimes rebellious against the most potent remedies. Now to apply this to the present subject and notes

Is it in the least degree probable that a vain shadow in a dream should make an indelible impresfion on the memories of the Apoftles, and their waking thoughts should not discover the deceit? Nay that it should inspire them with invincible courage to affert that Christ was truely rifen? Or who can with the least colour of reason accuse the Apostles of simplicity or any disorder of mind, when fuch are equal, uniform and strong

strong light shines in all their Chap. Writings ? whereas the discourses of Fools or diffracted Persons are unshape Abortions of the mind, beginnings without a regular progress, or if there be any coherence tis short, and alwayes attended with some notable extravagance. Besides, the constant order of their Lives and Actions was a certain proof of the composedness and wildom of their minds.

To furn up briefly what is convincing that the Apostles were fincere and certain in their Testimony. How could they be deceived when they fay him do Miracles, or by his power did the like? Did they all dream in a night, that they faw him appear after his Refurrection? what could imprefs. on them fuch a strong belief of that, of which the Senses were the proper

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proper Judges? Or could they conspire to invent such a falshood, and so easily to be convinced, with the least rational hope that the World should believe them? How was it likely, confidering the variable humors of Men, but that some of themselves either by violent fears, or attractive hopes should be prevailed on to discover the Fiction, and leave their Party? What could inspire them with fuch a false security, to despise the greatest Dangers, and such a foolish presumption to undertake the greatest difficulties? How could they expect to induce the World to believe in and worship One ignominiously put to death? After fuch a convincing evidence, what can Reason, nay suspicion object with any colour to weaken their testimony? The motives of credibility proper

bility are so strong that we may chap be as truly satisfied of the reality of the things related by the Apostles, as if we had been spectators of them our selves.

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CHAP. IV.

The accomplishment of Prophecies concerning the Messiah, in Jesus of Nazareth, is an unanswerable proof that he was sent from God to redeem the World. The circumstances of his Birth, the actions of his Life, his Sufferings and Death clearly foretold. The irreparable destruction of the State of the Jews was foretold as the just punishment for their rejecting of the Messiah. That terrible Event is a continual Proof that Jesus Christ was what he declar'd himself to be, the Son of God.

Chape 4

Chistian Religion

God. The Converting of the Gentile World to the Knowledge and Service of the true God by the Melaliah was foretold in the Scriptures; and is visibly fulfill I he Accomplishment of this Prophecy by the most unlikely means, against the strongest Opposition, is manifestly the effect of Divine Power, and is sufficient to convince the Jewish and Heathen Insidelity of the truth of Christianity.

Prophecies concerning the Messia His coming into the World, the Work he should do, his Sufferings, and the Consequences of them, afford undeniable proof that Jesus of Nazareth came from God for our Salvation. Prefeience of things to come, and independent on the settled course and order

order of Natural Causes, is an in-Cha communicable Prerogative of God. His Eye only can pierce the thick vail of futurity. He has an open unconfin'd prospect of all things that were, are, and shall be. Such perfection of Knowledge transcends Angelical Minds. Tis more easy for the Devil by an adventurous imitation to counterfeit Miracles, than to give a clear and distinct prediction of things to come that depend on free Agents. From hence it was that he gave responfals ambiguously, to conceal his ignorance of future events, and left those who consulted his Oracles dubious and hovering in what sense to understand them. God alone could instruct the Prophets to foretel things at such a distance, especially considering some of them are supernatural, and others

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Chap. 4. contingent from the wavering of fecond Causes. Now the several Prophecies of Jesus Christ if united together, make fuch an entire description of him, that they seem rather Historical Narratives of what is past, than Predictions of what was to come. According to the Prophecies, he was born of a Virgin, a branch of the almost extinguish'd Family of David, born in Bethlehem, usher'd in by a forerunner, meek, lowly, just, and a worker of Miracles. Therefore when John the Baptist sent some of his Disciples to enquire whether he was the Messiah that should come: Our Saviour gave no direct Answer in words, but referred them to his Works, that gave a full and real testimony concerning him, Go, tell John the things which ye do hear and see; the Blind receive

ceive their Sight, the Lame walk, the Chap. Lepers are cleansed, the Deaf hear, the Dead are raised up, and the Poor have the Gospel preached to them: That comparing his Miraculous Operations for the recovery of humane Bodies, with the Prophecies, there being a perfect Agreement between them, and both undoubtedly from God, They might by that clear and certain Caracter acknowledg him to be the Promifed Messish. Tis an Observation of St. Austin, That the Son of God Pravidens foreseeing the perverse Interpre- Dominus Ietations that his Enemies would quosdam fumake use of to darken the lustre turos, qui miof his Miracles, accusing him as a calumniensolemn Magician that wrought by tur, Magicis

buendo, Prophetas ante præmisit. Numquid si Mazus erat, & Magicis artibus fecit, ut coleretur & mortuus, Magus erat antequam natus? O Homo mortue & vermiscendo calum itose, Prophetis audi, Prophetis Lege. Tract. in Joan.

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the force of Inchantment, that fuch a false Perswasion might not prevail, sent the Prophets before his coming into the World. From hence the Saint argues to repress those impious calumnies: If by Magical Arts he did fuch Wonders as to conciliate Divine Honour to him even fince his Death, was he a Magician before he was born? and did he know the fuccession of all things in his Life before he lived, that by an impossible Miracle he predicted them to Moses, David, Esay, Daniel and others? Having thus argued, the Saint turns himself to those Infidels, as Christ to the Pharifees, looking round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardne s of their hearts, and said, O dead wretch, hear the Prophets.

But above all, His Death and Passion (the substance of the Gospel)

pel) is most exquisitly drawn with Chap. the lines of his own Blood. Daniel foretels the time; Zachary as if Zech. 11.12. present at the execrable contract between Judas and the High-Priests, tels us exactly the price of the Treason, and then as if transported to Calvary, he saw his Side open'd with the Spear, and notes it in these words, they shall look on him whom they have pierced. David, as if he had stood at the foot of the Cross in the hour of his Sufferings, relates the manner of them in the Person of our Crucified Redeemer; They peirced my Hands and my Feet: Then the disjoynting of his Parts by the Torture; I may tell all my Bones, they look and stare upon me: His hanging naked on the Cross, they part my Garments among them, and cast lots upon my Vesture: the bitter draught they offer'd him,

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P. 4. him, they gave me also Gall for my Meat, and in my thirst they gave me Vinegar to drink: The blasphemous derision of the Priests and People the spectators of his Death, All that see me, laugh me to scorn, they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him: His words spoken in the heighth of his distress, My God, my God, why hast thou for saken me? The Prophet Isaiah represents the Ignominy and Torments of his Passion, I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting: and by the eyes of his mind faw him crucified between two Thieves; He was named with Transgressors: and as present at his most affectionate dying prayer for his enemies, Father

Isa. chap. 52, 53.

forgive them, they know not what they chap do : observe, that he made intercession for Transgressors. Thus as several Painters that would draw divers Copies from the fame excellent Original, are intent to view its various Aspects, some directly, some on this and the other fide: fo the Prophets, as if they had been the Spectators of his cruel Sufferings, copied from the life, every one that part that the Holy Spirit affigned to them. Now how was it possible, if not instructed by Omniscience, that being so distant in time and place, and so long before the Accomplishment, they should concur in such an exact description of what should befal the Messiah? Men are not Prophets by the light of Reason: as Nature is not subjected to their power to work Miracles, neither

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is Futurity open to their view, to compole an History of things to come. The Death of Christ de. pended on leveral Causes; Men, Devils, and God himself concurr'd for divers Ends in the same Event. The two prime Conspirators against his Life, Lucifer and Caiphas, were moved both from Reasons of State to secure their own. The Devil to maintain his cruel Empire which for so many Ages he had usurp'd in the World. For our Saviour having with Authority cast out Legions of his ministring Spirits from those who were milerably possest by them, he was in fear of losing his Power. Besides, he foresaw that if Christ were the Son of God, the killing of him would bring such a crimson guilt upon the Jews, that no less punishment than their Rejection would fol-

follow: And to God should lose Cha his peculiar People. Caiaphas excired the Council to devote him as a Sacrifice to preferve their Nation from ruine : for their lafery de pending on their homage to the Romans, to prevent the jealousies that might arise by the fame of his mighty Works, and by the Reoples attendance on him, that were fed by his Miracles, they concluded on it as a necessary expedient, that Christ should dy, and all suspicions be removed with him Thus Men and Devils were the instruments, but God appointed that great Event. The storm fell from Heaven upon Him for our Sins. Tis therefore expresly said, He was delivered by the determinate Counsel and foreknowledge of God; who over-ruled the train of disorders, the work of their cruel malice, for contrary ends than were

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were design'd by them: For the Chap. 4. Were dengn a by their King-Devils were cast out of their Kingdom, the Jews depriv'd of their Liberty, and the Kingdom of Christ establish'd for ever. Now who could read in the Mind of God his free Decrees? even the Angels of Light that always fee his face, cannot without a revelation of themaid None but the Spirit that fearthes the deep things of God, could make the discovery? And who could foresee that the Messiah To often promised to the Jews, so impatiently expected, and ardently desir'd, should be so fiercely rejected by them? that his Death should be the effect as of his own love, for of their hatred? None blu God to whom all the periods of time are equally prelent, and who is more intimate with the Counfels and Passions of Were Men

Men than their own Souls are, could predict it. He communicated some rays of his Prescience to holy Men, who foretold that obscurest Contingency. From hence it follows that the clear Testimonies of the Prophets exactly sulfill'd in Jesus Christ, are an unanswerable demonstration that He was the expected Deliverer to restore the World.

2. The universal and irreparable Destruction of the State of the Jews, foretold as the just punishment of their rejecting the Messiah, is another illustrious proof of the Divinity of his Person and Doctrine.

To represent all the Characters of that Vengeance as they are set down by Josephus, an Eye-Witness and Historian of it, would lengthen this Discourse beyond the limits

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limits intended. It is fufficient to

observe,

1. That all the severe Scourges of God met in a direful conjunction against them. The most affrighting Prodigies were his forerunners; A flaming-Sword brandish'd in the Heavens, and Monsters born on the Earth: And War, Famine, Pestilence, and Fire were his Attendants. Those who escap't the Sword were confum'd by Famine; and those who were preferved from cruel War and Famine, were swept away by the Pestilence, or devour'd by the merciles Flames. Wherever they turn'd their eyes, Death in terrible Thapes appeard.

2. All these Judgments were inflicted at once upon them in the heaviest degrees. The Sword never made a greater destruction of 7111111

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than in Jerusalem: here were Rivers Chap of Blood, there Mountains of Carcasses. In some places nothing but filence and horrour amongst the dead, in others the crys and groans of the dying. Innumerable were massacred by the rage of Sedition amongst themselves. And when the mild Conquerour would have spared them, yet by an unparallel'd fierceness they would rather perish in an obstinate resistance. The Famine was so extreme, as compell'd even tender Mothers to eat the flesh of their miserable Children. The Fire confum'd the City from one end to the other, without leaving any part entire. The Temple, the Sanctuary of Religion, and Image of Heaven, where God so long had dwelt, had been serv'd and prais'd, and rendred his Oracles, was not exemp-

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ted from the fury of the Fire.

3. Their Calamity was extreme and irreparable. The first Desolation by the Chaldeans, so compassionately recorded by Feremiah, was not comparable in the degrees and continuance to this second by the Romans, of which CHRIST himself was the Chief Mourner, and made lamentation. Then they were transported together, and not to a very rigorous nor perpetual servitude in Babylon. After feventy years they recover'd their Liberty, and were restored to their Native Land. But in the last, the Captives were dispers'd among divers People; a fad Prognostick that they should never be joyned again in one Society. The Ruines of the Nation were · so great, that the pieces of it are scatter dall over the World. Where ever

ever a Jew is found, there is a stone Chap of ruin'd ferusalem never to be rebuilt. In short, that wretched Nation is rent into innumerable parts, and exposed to the contempt and hatred of all. As the Body of a Traitor is quarter'd, and the parts hung up in several places of publick view, to fignify the horrour of his Crimes in the severity of his Punishment: God has taken away all the marks of his Alliance with them. No distinction of their Tribes remain, no observance of their legal Ceremonies, no Priests, no Altars, no Sacrifices, no Prophets nor Miracles; in short, there is no true Worship among them, no God but angry and revenging their bloody impieties. And which is most worthy of consideration, the Romans that conquer'd them have loft their Empire, and the Na-

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Nations which were subdued by their Arms, have recovered their Liberty: But the Jews after fixteen hundred years are still miserable. Now is not this Judgment of God upon them a dreadful proof of the extremity of their Wickedness in crucifying JESUSCHRIST, and that consequently he was, as he declar'd himself to be, the Son of God, and that his Office and Do-Etrine were from Heaven. Never before did the Wrath of God break forth in such a fierce manner against a sinful Nation. Therefore tis represented under the Image of the final Doom, when Justice arm'd with flames shall devour the Ungodly, and the whole World become a Theatre of Terrors. And never was any other Nation guilty of such an high provocation: for the Son of God descended but once

once among Men to be personal-Chap. ly crucified. The fingularity of the punishment is a visible instructive fign of their transcendent Crime. Immediately upon their pronouncing the capital Sentence against him on Earth, their utter Ruine was pronounc'd in Heaven. And the execution of the Sentence was deferr'd no longer, but till the Elect of that People were brought in, and by the Preaching and excellent Miracles of the Apostles, the Resurrection of Christ, and the truth of the Golpel were confirm'd, and thereby a beginning and form given to the new Christian Church. Now they have written on their foreheads in very legible characters, the Fatal Curse which their Fathers pronounc'd concerning Jesus Christ, His Blood be on Us, and our Children. When K 3 Moles

Chap. 4. Moses with indignation for their Idolatry, broke the Tables of the Law, God reestablish'd them, but when for a greater guilt God himfelf broke them, there is no possible Redintegration.

If it be faid, that 'tis not necesfary to attribute this Ruine of the Jews to the particular Vengeance of God, but only to the Initability of humane things, wherein such disastrous Revolutions sometimes

happen.

I answer, That although Divine Justice was so visible in their afto-*Philoft. vit. nishing Destruction, that * Titus Apoll. lib.6. himself refus'd a Triumphal-Crown after his compleat Victory, declaring that he was but the Instrument of God's Anger, who was the Invisible Emperor in that bloody Expedition; yet to force an acknowledgment of it from all that

that are not wilfully blind, it was Chap. foretold when the Jews were in peace, and their killing the Meffish specified, as the Meritorious Cause wherein that terrible Effect was included to Thus our Saviour in the Parable of the Husbandmen and Vineyard, after they had put to death the Master's Son, he adds, What shall therefore the Lord of the Vineyard do? He will come and destroy the Husbandmen, and give the Vineyard to others. And upon his drawing near to the City of Jerusalem, he wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine Enemies shall cast a Trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the Ground, and shall not. leave K 4

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leave in thee one stone upon another; Chap. 4. because thou knewest not the time of thy Visitation. This was also foretold by Moses in all the terrible Circumstances: The Lord shall bring a

Deut. 28.

Nation against thee from far, from the end of the Earth, as swift as the Eagle flyeth; a Nation whose Tongue thou shalt not understand; a Nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young: and be shall eat the fruit of thy Cattel, and the fruit of thy Land, until thou be destroyed; which also shall not leave thee either Corn, Wine, or Oyl, or the encrease of thy Kine, or flocks of thy Sheep, until he have destroyed thee: And he shall besiege thee in all thy Gates throughout all thy Land which the Lord thy God bath given thee, in the Siege, and in the straitness wherewith thine Enemies shall distress thee. Such was the Threatning, and the Event

Event was correspondent in all the Chap. degrees of misery. Which as it demonstrates the truth of the Prophecy, so it may instruct us how fearful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God.

3. The converting of the Gentile World to the faving Knowledg of God by the Messiah was foretold in the Scriptures. The beams of this glorious Truth were gradually dispens'd to the Israelites as their weak understandings could fustain it. When the Covenant was made with Abraham God declared in express terms, In thy Seed shall all the Nations of the World be bleffed. That Seed was the Messiah, not the people of the Jews descended from Abraham: for they were so far from being a univerfal Bleffing to the World, that on the

Chap. 4. the contrary, they vainly presum'd that God for their sakes despis'd the rest of Mankind. And indeed before the coming of Christ they were an inclosed Garden, the peculiar People of God, and without the compass of Judea Sin reign'd absolutely and universally. Now that Promise clearly signifies, that the Favour and Bleffing of God that he conferr'd upon Abraham in making known to him his Will, and promising to be his God, and of his Posterity, should one day be extended to all Nations, by calling them to his Knowledg and Service. To this agrees the Pro-phesie of Jacob: The Scepter shall

Gen. 49. 10. not depart from Juda, nor the Lawgiver from between his feet, till Shilo come, and to him shall the gathering of the People be: that is, the Gentiles shall be converted from their Idols

to the true God by the Messiah, Chap 4 whom the Jews acknowledg to be fignified by that Title. And Mofer introduces God as complaining of the Idolatry and Ingratitude of the Tews, and declaring They have moved me to jealousie with that which is not God, they have provoked me to Deut. 32.21. anger with their vanities, and I will move them to jealoufy with those which are not a People, and I will provoke them to anger with a foolish Nation. The external Covenant between God and his People is represented by the union of Marriage, to signifie the Duty they owe to God, the highest honour, the most ardent affections, and the benefits they receive from him. Therefore when the Jews gave Divine Adoration, the highest respects of Religion, to Idols, they provok'd God to jealoufy; and he threatens he would break

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break his Alliance with them, and give his Heart and Love to those which were not a People; And by the Law of Counter-Passion they should be provok'd to Jealousy. Tis very visible these expressions fignify the calling of the Gentiles. And David by the same Inspiration, in many Psalms celebrates the Kingdom of the Messiah. In Psal. 22. he is introduc'd, speaking, My praise shall be of thee in the great Congregation; all the ends of the World shall remember, and turn unto the Lord; all the kindreds of the Nations shall worship before thee. And in the 67 Psal. God be merciful to us, and bless us, and cause his Face to shine upon us. Selah. That thy way may be known upon Earth, and thy faving health among all Nations. Let the people praise thee O God, let all the people praise thee. The Prophet Esay in

in his Revelations clearly speaks Chap. of the great design of God to bring the Gentiles to his service. Thus in the second Chapter 'tis prophesied; And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the Mountain of the Lords House shall be established in the tops of the Mountains, and shall be exalted above the Hills. And many People shall go and say, Come ye, let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, to the House of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the Lord, and the Sword of the Lord out of Jerusalem.

And among all the rest none is more clear and express than what is recorded in Isa. 49. There first the Messiah is represented as declaring his Commission from God to go to the People of Israel; The Lord hath called me from the womb,

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Chap. 4. from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my Name, and he said unto me, Thou art my Servant, in whom I will be glorified. And after complains of the oblinacy of the ingraceful Synagogue; Then I faid, I have laboured in vain, I have fent my frenoth for nought of in vain, yet furely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with God. And immediately after tis added, And now faith the Lord that form'd me from the Womb to be his Servant, to bring Jacob again to him, though Israel be not gather'd, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength. And he faid, it is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant, to raise up the Tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Ifrael; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou maift be my Salvation to the ends of the Earth. This Oracle is precise and full; for it **Speaks**

Moeaks of the Nations in opposition to the Tribes of Ifrael, and di-Chap. rectly foretels that the Jews would neglect the instructions of the Meffiah, and that upon their Infidelity God would by the Messiah give saving knowledge to all Nations. And in the same sense he speaks in the 54th Chapter: Sing, O Barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud thou that didst not travel with Child: for more are the Children of the desolate than of the married, saith the Lord. Who is the desolate and barren, but the Gentiles without God in the World, whiles the Jews were honour'd and bleft in the Mystical Marriage with him? And who are the Children of the forfaken that should be far more numerous than those of the married, but the Believers of the Christian Church, in oppofition

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fition to the Jewish Church? And the other succeeding Prophets concur in this prediction. Malachy the last speaks of it in such express terms, as are capable to convince any that does not wilfully renounce the use of his Eyes and Understanding. After God is introduc'd rejecting the Jews, and their Temple Service; I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts, neither will I accept an Offering at your hands. He adds, to fignifie the calling of a new Church, for from the rising of the Sun to the going down of the Jame, my Name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place Incense shall be offer'd to my Name, and a pure Offering, for my Name shall be great among the Heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts. Thus that great wonder was clearly foretold by the Prophets, and as a work to be performed

formed by the glorious Power of Chap God. And accordingly it is accomplish'd. For who but God could have inspir'd the Apostles to undertake an Enterprise so contrary to Humane Prudence, being equally dangerous and impossible? And who elle could have made it fuccessful beyond all imagination? When the Pride of Pharoah was humbled, and his Strength broken by the most despicable creatures, even the Magicians were compelled to acknowledge it to be the Finger of God: but his Arm was revealed when the Spiritual Pharoah with all his Powers of Darkness were overcome by fuch weak Instruments. What furious Winds from all parts of the World conspir'd to extinguish the first springing Light of the Gospel? The Heathen Emperours destroyed innumerable

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innumerable Persons, presuming to drown the Memory of Christ in the Blood of the Christians. But fuch were the Faith and Love of Believers of all conditions to their Crucified Redeemer, that with the same joy they ran to suffer the most terrible punishments, as if they had been to receive Crowns. In vain the strongest Combinations were made against the Truth. For the knowledge of the only true God, and his incarnate Son Jesus Christ, overcame Impiety with all its Idols, and Ignorance with all its numerous Masters. What is become of all the Heathen Deities, fo honour'd, fo fear'd, fo obstinately defended? Where are their Altars, their Statues, their Sacrilegious Priests and Sacrifices? They are buried in the ruines of their own Temples, in the darkness of eternal

eternal oblivion. Where are all Chap. the Sects of Philosophers, the Platonists, the Peripateticks, the Stoicks, the Epicureans, and the rest that fill'd Greece with their Fame, and so many Volumes with their Fancies and Errour? Like a Torrent that rouls down with great noise from the top of a Mountain; so for a time the Speculations of their lofty Minds poured along in a floud of swelling froathy Eloquence; but now (and for how many Ages since?) the very channel is dryed up wherein they ran, so that scarce any visible ruines remain in Athens it self of the Schools where they taught. The greatest among them, | Plato, adorn'd with | to Toils year. the title of Divine, could never see wasir abeis his Commonwealth, fram'd by groundle Auga. Chrys. de laud. him with so much study, to be e-Paul 4. stablish'd in one City. Whereas if

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we consider the Gospel of Christ,

'tis hard to determine whether the OTAN SU 36 Doctrine be more simple, or the negotiwidia- Apostles the first Masters of it to outward appearance; Yet withnaonuO 3 דפ אבפעד וטעבvov कर देनवान्य out Learning or humane strength, Crávelanov in a short space they triumphed २०४ में ठावेमर्ड ०४७६५ महिणी १९५ over the Eloquence of the Greeks, n) and even 5, 2) 8- the Power of the Romans, the Rage ประชาร หา หางชาνοι έπαλληλοι of Barbarous Nations. They an) ove xeis, n) brogated Laws, chang'd Customs, 2015 1) Tous wa- and renewed the face of the World. SETAIS, xi 6 rate Prophetick Parable vos, esaugone-was fulfill'd, The Kingdom of Heaσεν κρατήσειν, ven, that is, the dispensation of the Beia 715 x d-Gospel, is like to a grain of Mustardπόρεντ Αω- feed; one of the smallest grains, but ναμις, παντά feed; one of the smallest grains, but πε εδηλον. Ibid. of that spirit and quality that it fuddenly springs up and spreads abroad.

> This happy and stupendous succels of the Disciples of Jesus Christ, consider'd in it self, is an unanswerable

rable proof that the Christian Reli-Chap gion came from Heaven. For it was only possible to the Divine Power. Tis no wonder the Religion of Mahomet extended and establish'd its Conquests in many Countries: For that Seducer perswaded the barbarous People by force of Arms, they must be his Disciples or Slaves. And can the Mind form a clear Judgment, or the Will make a free Choice, when under a tyrannous necessity of Compliance, or losing all the Comforts of Life? Can Violence and Cruelty produce a Rational Faith? That may force them to a counterfeit complyance, but cannot make Men fincerely believe; 'tis apt to breed Form without, and Atheism with-Now that a Persecuted Religion should live and flourish in the midst of flames, is as truly ad-

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mirable as if a little Stream should Chap. 4. pass through an Arm of the Ocean, retaining its Freshness and Purity in the midst of Salt and Turbid That when the Minds Waters. of Men were prepoffest with inveterate Opinions contrary to its Supernatural Mysteries, and their Wills over-ruled by Carnal Affections utterly averse from its Holy Precepts, the World was captiv'd to the belief and obedience of it, is the most noble effect of Omnipotence. For other Miracles, though above the Laws of Nature, yet were on the lower order of creatures without life and fense; but this internal Miracle was wrought on the Minds and Hearts of Men. To raise the Dead, to calm a Storm, to suspend the force of Fire, to change Waters into Blood, is not so glorious a work

as the converting Rebellious Souls Chap. 4 to God, and making them a willing People to his holy Laws. And if we further consider the Prophecies so many Ages before concerning it, and observe the Harmony betwixt the Works and Word of God, there refults a Demonstration as clear and strong as is possible. The Prediction and Accomplishment are equally divine. The fuccess justifies the truth of the Prophecy, and the truth of the Prophecy justifies the Divinity of the Christian Religion. For by the Apostles and their Successors, the Heathens were turned from Idols, to the Service of one God the Creator of the World: which was foretold by the Prophets, not only as a thing that should arrive, but to be performed by the Power of God. To ascribe then this glori-L 4 ous

Chap. 4

ous Work to humane Artifice, as if his Providence had been prevented by others, from doing that that he promised should be done by his own Power, is so directly contrary to his Wisdom and his Truth, that common Reason abhors the thoughts of it. Therefore the Christian Religion is Divine, having God for its Author. Thus the Truth of the Gospel is victorious over the Jewish, or the prophane Infidel.

It may be argued against the Jews, that their God foretold his Messiah should convert the Nations. No other but one authorised from above could do it. Ie sus Christ has done it, therefore he is the Meffiah. And consequently they are either blind with prejudice, or maliciously deny the known truth. To prophane Infidels it may be

urged,

vidence could foretel so great and marvellous a change of the World, none but the Divine Power could effect it, therefore twas the true God that made the project and event so exactly to correspond in all things

Add further, that by comparing the Prophecies of Christ and his Kingdom with their accomplishment, the two forts of enemies against the Gospel, are made useful to convince one another. The Pagans by the fews, that these things were foretold, the Jews by the Pagans, that these things were fulfil'd.

*St. Austin relates that the Hea- * Aliquando thens seeing the exact agreement Pagani facibetween the Prophecies in the Old unt nobis hujusmodi qua-

stionem, cum vident que scripta sunt sic impleri, ut negari omnino non possint. Audent, ut dicant videstis ita sieri, & tanquam prædicta sint, conscripsistis. Serm. 67. Divers.

Testa-

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Testament so clear in words, and their accomplishment in the New so clear in the Effects, had nothing to reply, but that they were written after the things were done, and feigned to be Predictions of antient date. As Virgil weaving Fables of Eneas, feign'd him to be in the Elifian Fields, and to receive from Anchises a Prediction of his Descendents in a long succession and order of Men and Times; which was the story of what was actually past when he wrote it. In answer to this pretence, he breaks out with wonder and joy, O Gloria Regis nostri! the Cause is gain'd, and the Victory of Truth could not be more glorious. For whereas the many Nations in Europe, Asia, Africa, subdued by the Arms of the Romans, were compelled to observe the Rites of their Religion:

on: The Jews only were permitted (hap. 4. to enjoy their Sacred Books, and Sparfi Junt their own Worship, and were dis- ubiq; Judei, pers'd into all Countries. And thus portantes coby the admirable Counsel of God, dices, quibus by the admirable Counsel of God, Christus prethey give credit to the Gospel a- dicatur. Si mong the Gentiles. For if we confider the reverence they bore to rarum, non the Writings of the Prophets, that adjuvarent with the greatest care they have pradicatiopreserved them as the most preci-nem Evangeous Inheritance left by their Fa- lii que fructithers, and their mortal hatred of terrarum. Fefus Christ and his Goffel, that willingly they would Ipend their Ambos inde Blood to deface the Memorials of convinco. Juit, it is an invincible Argument deum, quia id that the Predictions concerning the et impletum State of the Christian Church record- Ego cognovi: ed in their Scriptures, are fincerely ego bac non delivered, and of Divine Autho- convici. rity. This their Malice is an advantage to the Faith of the Gospel,

enim in uno testimonio

Serm. 67. prophetatum, Paganu, quia Chap. 4.

and by constraint they are the great Confirmers of it. This is sufficient to reduce the Heathens to silence and confusion. And the Pagan being convinc'd by the Books of the Tews, the Jew may be convinc'd by the Testimony of the Pagans: for if the Records so jealously kept by that Nation were from Divine Inspiration, if they contain Antient Prophecies which the Heathens see verified in the Gospel and the Christian Church, why do not the Jews acknowledge Jesus Christ to be the promised Messiah? If the Vail were not taken from Moses's face, and laid on their hearts, they must clearly see that the Light of the Gentiles is the Glory of Israel. 'Tis equally unreasonable to doubt with the Atheist that the Messiah was ever promifed, or to believe with the Iews he is yet to come.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

The Testimony produc'd by St. John for the proof of Christianity, briefly consider'd. The Witness from Heaven, the Father, Word and Spirit; The Witnesses on Earth, the Spirit, Water and Blood, conspire in declaring JESUS CHRIST to be the Son of God, and Saviour of Men. An Answer to Objections against the Doctrines of the Trinity, the Divine Incarnation, and the mean State and Sufferings of the Son of God in the World. The Conclusion. The Gospel so proved, deserves our firmest Assent and Adherence to its Doctrines. Carnal or spiritual Lusts hinder the belief of it. It sets before us the most powerful Motives to love God.



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God. We are obliged by the strongest Reasons to obey its Precepts.

He Sum of all that has been faid, is comprised in the Testimony that St. John produces to prove that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and the Redeemer of the World. This I will briefly open: There are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy-Ghoft, and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in Earth, The Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood, and these three agree in one. All the Divinity gave testimony of this important Truth. The Father not only by the Miracles wrought by his Power to confirm the Mission of Christ, but (which is here principally intended) by a voice from Heaven: First at his Baptism, This is my well-beloved Son,

in whom I am well pleased. And at Chap. his Transfiguration before some of his Disciples, a Shining Cloud, the fign of the Divine Presence, encompast them, and a voice came forth of the Cloud, This is my well beloved Son, hear him. Upon this glorious Voice they were struck with fuch an impression of fear that they fell on their faces. And when our Saviour near his Passion prayed, Father glorifie thy Name, a voice came from Heaven, I have glorified it, and will glorifie it. Now can there remain any doubt after such an high attestation from the most Soveraign Authority?

The Son also, besides the perfect holiness of his life, the exquisite Wisdom of his Doctrine, the Wonders of his Works, his Resurrection from the dead, that were authentick proofs of his Celestial

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Person and Calling, after his As-Chap. 5. cention gloriously appear'd from Heaven in diverse Visions to the Preachers of his Gospel. To Saul in his Journey to Damascus, calling to him, Saul, Saul, why perfecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the Pricks. This is an unexceptionable testimony that he is the Son of God, being rifen from the dead, and returned to Heaven from whence he thus discover'd himfelf. 2 Now that this was real and no fantaftick illusion is evident by the maryelous effects of it. Those who were companions in the journey were feiz'd with great terror, and himself struck blind by the overpowering splendor of the Apparition. But especially the effects of it upon his Soul are convincing, who it was that spake to him. For Saul was by Sect a Pharifee,

rifee, that of all others most passio- Chap nately adher'd to the Jewish Religion: by Temper hot and violent, by Profession a persecutor of the Christians. One that breathed forth Threatning and Slaughter, that excited the Fury of the High-Priefts, sollicited their Cruelty. In short, a fierce spirit that envied Nero the title of the first Persecutor of the Church. Yet this Man by this Vision and Voice from Heaven, of a furious Persecutor in an instant became a zealous Apostle, of a Wolf became a Pastor. He presently exprest his entire submission, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? There is nothing fo hard to do, nothing so dreadful to fuffer, but I will readily undertake for thine honour, and the propagating thy Truth. Now from whence came this Change fo strange

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strange, so new, in a person confirm'd in the opposite party? from whence this relignation of will so entire and perfect, so unexpected and fudden? What gave him courage to contradict to their faces the High-Priests, whose instrument he was, and declare that Jefus whom they called a Deceiver. was the Son of God, and their Judge? What animated him to appear before Kings and Emperours, to testifie this dangerous Truth? What made him with unparallel'd activity, with the most ardent affections, propagate the Gospel, and after a thousand perils by Sea and Land, a thousand disgraces and injuries, at last to confirm the Faith of Christ with his Blood ? It is therefore past all contradiction that he had the greatest assurance that the Son of

of God spake to him.

Another Vision of the WORD from Heaven was to St. John, when he was pleas'd to reveal to him the future state of his Church, its Combats and Victories: He then appear'd in a form expressive of his Majesty, Power, and Providence, requifite for the ordering all the great Events that should befal it: And faid, I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I live for ever, and have the Keys of Hell, and of Death: wherein he appropriates to himself the incommunicable titles of the Deity; and then declares those two astonishing Miracles, that the Prince of Life that had an Eternal Principle of it in himself, was dead; and that one who had been dead, was alive. This Riddle the Gospel unfolds; The Son of God was made M 2 Man,

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Man, and by that admirable union allied Eternity and Time, Life and Death together. As tis a common form of speech, that a Man dies when the Body is depriv'd of Life, though the Soul be immortal: So it was true, the Son of God died when his Body was crucified, though he was uncapable of the least diminution of his Divine life. And after three days he rose by the Divine Power to enjoy an Immortal Life; And have the Keys of. Hell, and Death. The irrefistible force of Death all Men must yield to, and from the Grave there's no redemption by finite power. But Jesus Christ has Soveraign Authority and Power to open the Grave, and raise the Dead to an happy Immortality. This glorious Appearance made St. John to fall as dead at his Feet, and could not re-

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cover himself, till assured by the Chap. reviving words of his favour. The Spirit also appear'd from Heaven to give Testimony concerning the divine Person and Office of Christ: First, by descending as a Dove on him when he was baptifed. This was the completion of the Prophecy; The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, He has anointed me to preach the Gospel to the Poor, to publish Deliverance to the Captives. And in the second of the Acts the Spirit descended in the form of Fiery Tongues upon the Apostles, to qualifie them for preaching the Gospel to the World: And 'tis worthy of observation, that the Apostles were before this very defective in Wildom and Courage, so that their Divine Master, though Goodness it self, yet tax'd them for their stupidity, and in his Sufferings

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Chap. 5. ings they all for sook him. But af-ter the effusion of the Spirit upon them, they were endowed with that admirable Wildom and Refolution, that nothing could gainfay and overcome. They prefently spake in various Languages the things concerning Jesus Christ, that the World was aftonish'd, and many converted by this Testimony from God, for the honour of our Saviour, and others confounded in their obstinacy. Now since this miraculous descent of the Spirit was to ratify the Promise that he made to them, If I go away, I will send to you another Comforter: What more clear and valuable Testimony can we have that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the World? Infidelity should reply, If we had heard these Voices, and seen those glorious Visions, we should be con-

convinc'd; but what affurance Chap. have we there is no deceit in these Relations? I answer, There never was clearer Grounds of the belief of any thing done without the compals of our own lenses, than of what the Apostles testify, as hath been evidently proved before. And certainly as those who saw and heard those things, were by the Divine Characters in the external Objects, and by their efficacy on their Spirits, fully perswaded they were not deceived; so we have as strong proofs that they did not deceive us in their Reports.

Ishall briefly consider the other Testimonies. And there are Three that bear witness in Earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood; and these Three agree in one. The Spirit is to be considered in two different manners in the Testimonies attri
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buted to him, either in respect of those Representations by a Dove and Fiery Tongues, or in respect of his Yertues and Influences communicated to the Christian Church: The first was his Testimony from Heaven; The second his Testimony on Earth. And these were his Extraordinary Gifts, so liberally dispens'd at the first preaching of the Gospel: To one was given by the Spirit the Word of Wildom, to another the Word of Knowledge, to another Faith; that is, extraordinary confidence in the Divine Power, for the producing Miraculous Eftects; to another the Gift of Healing, to another the working of Miracles, to another Prophecy, to another Discerning of Spirits, to another divers kinds of Tongues, to another the Interpretation of Tongues. Now because these Operations more eminently declare

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clare the Presence and Power of the Spirit than his ordinary Graces, they are called by that name. For understanding the second Witness, the Water, two things are observable:

1. That in the Rituals of Moles's frequent Washings, were enjoyned for the purifying of the
lews from Legal Pollutions contracted by them. And as those
Corporal Stains were Resemblances of the vitious habits of the
mind; so the cleansing by Water
was typical of sanctifying Grace
that purifies the heart. And for
this Reason under the New Covenant to represent the sanctification of Christians by an outward
sign, Baptism in Water was appointed.

2. The Apostle John in the Narrative of the Sufferings of Christ, tells

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tells us that a Souldier pierced his Side with a Spear, fo that Blood and Water came out. This is not recited by S. John merely as a circumstance of the History, or as a certain proof of his Death, but the following words THe that faw this, testifies it, and his Testimony is worthy of belief; and he knows that he says true, that you may believe 7 declare it to be of fingular confequence. And accordingly he says, that our Saviour came by Water and Blood, with refpect to that which was done at his Crucifixion, which was fo ordered by Divine Wisdom for high ends: that is, the Water issuing out of his Side, was a fit Emblem of that Sanctifying Grace that is given to all that have Communion with him in his Death.

3. For the Testimony of the Blood, 'tis also to be observed, that

that by the Mofair Institution daily cha Sacrifices were offered up, and a most solema one, by the High-Priest in the day of Aronement, to expiate the guilt of Ceremonial Uncleannels, and to restore those who for that were excluded from external Communion with God in the Sanctuary. Now as that legal guilt arising from those outward pollutions, and the feparation of those who were so polluted, from the Service of God, was a representation of the Moral Guilt and Punishment that follows the vitious habits and actions of Men; so the shedding the Blood of the Sacrifice and Offering, was typical of the true Propitiation that was to be made by the Blood of Christ. And this is peculiarly remark'd by the Apostle, that Tefus came not only by Water, but by Water and

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Chap. 5. and Blood; and the spirit is the Truth.

Stiffies of it, and the Spirit is the Truth. something distinct from the former, i.e. that the flowing of his Blood fignified the reconciling efficacy of his Death, by satisfying Divine Justice, and consequently the remission of Sins given to those who believe in him. Now briefly, to shew the force of their confpiring Testimony that Jesus is the Son of God and our Redeemer, These things may be confidered absolutely in themselves, or as the accomplishment of the Prophecies concerning the Messiah. In the last respect they affor'd us a great assurance of this Truth. For all was expresly foretold. And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all Flesh, and your Sons and your

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your Daughters shall prophesie, and Chap your young Men shall see Visions, and your old Men shall dream Dreams: And on my Servants and Hand-Maidens I will pour out in those dayes of my Spirit, and they shall prophesie. This promile was univerfally acknowledged to refer to the coming of the Messiah. For that of Water, (that is, Sanctification) not only the washing under the Law were figures of it, but 'twas also clearly prophefied of in many places, and most expresly in Ezekiel, I will sprinkle clean Water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthines will I cleanse you. A new Heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you, and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes. And for the third Testimony, besides that the typical Blood of the Messiah randown from

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from all the Sacrifices, it was also foretold expressly by Esaiah what his Sufferings should be, and the Benefits accruing from them.

Now if we compare the Oracle with the event, who can justly donot that the Messiah is come? But if we consider the things themselves they afford an uncontroulable Tellimony of Christ's Divine Mission! Compare the Primitive Church either with the Jews or the Gentiles, and fee the difference between them. The Spirit that was communicated but as it were in a few drops to the Jews, after the Afcension of Christ fell in a main showr upon the Christian Church, inriching them with supernatural gifts: some favoured Revelations of Sublime Truths, above the discovery of the human Understanding; some foretelling

telling things to come that were Chap. beyond the discovery of the most sharp fighted Reason; some speaking diverse Languages wherein they had never been instructed; some having such an expraordinary Faith in the Divine Power and Goodness, that innumerable Miracles were done by them in the name of Christ If we look into the state of the Gentiles, how thick and prodigious was the darkness that overspread that Chaos of Impiety? In the Roman Empire, that comprized the flower of Wit and Learning, what foolish and extravagant opinions of the Deity were comonly received? What Idolatries, what Impurities, what Abominations were freely practifed? But by the preaching of the Gospel how clearly were the minds of Men instructed in the true Knowledg of God? And

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And what a change was made in their Lives? The World that was as a barren Defart, was fuddenly chang'd into a Paradife, fruitful in all good works. Innocence, Humility, Purity, Justice, Charity, Love to God, Refignation to his Will, were eminently visible in all Nations, and all forts of persons that were converted to the Faith of Christ. Now who caused such a marvellous and holy Revolution in the World but God? What less than a Divine Power could raife Men above Sense, and make them victorious over the Lufts of corrupt Nature, fortified by Custom, a fecond Nature? Is it conceivable, supposing the Doctrine of Christ were not from Heaven, that it should produce such admirable Effects? And is it conceivable that God would adorn with all his Graces

Graces the Image of his own Ex-Chap. cellency, his most precious Benefits, those who did not honour him according to his Will? Can there be found fuch aftonishing Contrarieties joyn'd together, as the most impious Errour and Depravation of the Mind, with the greatest Purity and Rectitude of the Will and Affections? For if Jesus Christ were not the Son of God, those who worshipt him were in a mortal Delufion.

The third Testimony the Apofile produces is the Blood: that is, Peace with God and Conscience, the bleffed Fruit of Justification by Faith in the Blood of Christ. The Heathen World was in a dark State of fears, or flept securely in the shadow of Death. Some were in a Hectic Trembling, continually haunted with

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with the Apparition of their Sins, as so many Infernal Furies: O thers, though guilty of most fearful Crimes, were fecure from Stupid Atheism: Others were quiet, from a presumption the riff'd by Opinions unworthy of God, as if he would neglect his own Glory to thew Mercy to them. Now the Gofpel to conquer the fears of fensible afflicted Sinners, and to establish a lively hope in God's Mercy, reveals that the Son of God became Man, and offered up his Life and Blood to Divine Juffice, as an explatory Sacrifice for the Sins of Men. This reconciled God, whose Honour was abundantly secured by that Satisfaction. This appear dall the unquier Agitations of the Spirits of Believers, and produc'd the Peace that paffes understanding,

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a Joy unspeakable and glorious. Chap. This delivered them from the fear of Death, under which the World was fo long in bondage. And it is worthy the observing, that no Principles of Nature ever produc'd such a generous Contempt of Death, as the Christian Religion did in the Professors of it. The Alexanders, Scipio's, and Cafars had trembled at the fight of these Savage Beafts that were let loofe upon the Martyrs, at the preparations of Cruelty to torment them. Whereas they regarded them with tranquillity; nay with Joy, as the matter of their Triumph. This was true Valour indeed, for the Confession of the most important Truth, and superiour to the Courage of those who were called Fulmina Belli, the most Renowned Souldiers. For in a Battel, by N 2 Mar-

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Martial Sounds, by Violent Motions the Spirits are fired, and Men scarce feel their Wounds, and are inconsiderate of their danger. But the Martyrs had nothing to heighten their Courage, but in cool blood deliberately and without alteration encounter'd that terrible Enemy. Besides, Souldiers in the sharpest Conflicts have some hopes of Victory, or else of a sudden and honourable Death, Aut cita Mors, aut Victoria leta. And he that rusheth into perils with a feeming bravery, when there is hopes of escaping, has not resolution to look Death in the face when tis inevitable. There is an eminent instance of this in a famous Captain of late memory, the Duke Biron: none was more bold in fight; but when he was to receive the Sentence of Death for his

his Crimes, none more disorder'd Cha by fear formetimes he was in a rage against his Judges, and after his passion was evaporated, fell into the other extremity, unmanly crys, complaints, and low submisfions to obtain favour. But the more than Heroick Constancy of the Martyrs contemned Death in its nearest approaches, and most fearful pomp. Christian Religion has often transform'dothe most tender Women and Children into Men, or rather into Angels, making them suffer with joy, that which our Nature cannot fee withour horrour. It changed as it were Flesh and Blood into a Celestial substance, insensible of Fire and Sword, and the most cruel Violences.

Now this unshaken Resolution in Christians encountring the last N 3 Enemy

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of God's favour reconciled by the most pure and precious Blood of his Son, and the hopes of everlasting happiness in his presence.

To conclude this Argument, tis to be observed there is no proof more proper that Jesus Christ is the Redeemer of the World, than the joynt testimony of the Spirit, Water and Blood: For whereas Sin was the only cause of our Ruine, the Office of our Saviour is to repair that Ruine, and consequently he that effectually does it, is to be acknowledged, believed, and imbraced as our Saviour. Now the worst effects of Sin are the ignorance of the Mind, the depravation of the Affections, and the terfors of Conscience from the apprehenfions of Vengeance. Therefore since the Gospel of Christ has brought

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brought Celestial Light, Purity, Chap. and Peace into the World, it is an infallible proof that He is the Redeemer of it. The Sun that visits the World with its refreshing beams, has no clearer marks of the Divine Wisdom in making it, and ordering its motions, than the Spiritual Light of the Gospel that irradiates the minds of Men, before in deep darkness. The riches of the Earth in variety of Fruits is not a more convincing Argument of the Divine Goodness, than to see the Souls of Men that before were as dead earth, under the curse of Heaven, to abound in all the fruits of Righteousness. The separating the Sea from the Land, and fetting bounds to its impetuous Waves, is not a greater effect of God's Power than the calming the tempests of an unquiet Conscience, and e**stablishing** N 4

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stablishing Tranquillity in it. And these Blessings we entirely owe to Jesus Christ, in whose Name they are obtain'd, by whose Spirit they are conferr'd, and for whose Glory

they are design'd.

Now what more is requifite toafford us satisfaction that I Esus CHRIST came from God, and revealed his Will in order to our happinels? Can it be reasonably expected that new Miracles should be wrought to fatisfy every Sceptick that is still unsatisfied? Indeed the fountain of them is not dried up, the Power of God is not weaken'd, nor his Mercy lessened, but in extraordinary Cases, when the Gospel is first preach'd to a Nation, it may be expected that to convert them from Gentilism to the Christian Faith he will make himself known not only by Word,

Word, but Power, in Supernatural Operations. But the vein of Miracles is not still current in the Church, there being sufficient motives of Belief for the conviction of all that are not obstinate, without the performing new. Must the Son of God present himself to all Men in a visible Glory? Or must his Divine Father give another Majestick Testimony from Heaven concerning him? If we have not such sensible Evidence, we have as fure: The accomplishment of Scripture-Prophecies is a permanent Miracle, a more certain proof to us than that Oracular Revelation. For God spake but once in that Voice, but he speaks by the Prophets to the end of Time. That was more aftonishing, but less instructive to us than Prophecies, that are continually unfolded and 119

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s, and verified by Events.

Before I finish this Argument, I will briefly consider what is objected against some Doctrines of the Gospel, viz. The Trinity, the Divine Incarnation, the Mean state and Sufferings of the Son of God in the World. These Points have been opposed by the Jews, and other Insidels, as mere Impossibilities, directly contrary to the Reason of Mankind.

To this I answer; We must distinguish between what is incomprehensible to Humane Reason, and what is repugnant to it; between the things which Reason cannot perfectly understand how they can be, and the things which it perfectly understands that they cannot be. Natural Light may not be able to discover the being of some things, and the manner of their

their existence, which really are Chap. But what it fees to involve a contradiction, is absolutely impossible. Now there is no Point in the whole complexion of the Christian Faith that is repugnant to Reafon. The unity and supreme equality of the Three Persons in the Godhead transcends our conception, but Reason cannot prove it to be impossible. For the Essence of God is not of the fame condition with created Substances; so that although in the whole compals of the Creatures there is no like instance, but one Nature is always joyn'd with one Subfiftence, yet it does not follow that the Divine Nature may not subsift in Three Persons. All the difficulty that is pretended to be invincible is this; That the manner of it is incomprehensible. And 'tis necessarily

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swhat is Infinite should be comprehended by a finite mind.

The Incarnation of the Son of God, wherein the Effence of Chris flightly confifts, is not contrary to Reason, Indeed 'tis impossible that the Divine Nature should be substantially chang'd into the humane Nature, and God ceafe to be God in becoming Man, but the Union of the Deity to the humane Nathre is not impossible. For what repugnance is there, either in respect of God, or the Creature? Is in impossible that the Supreme Goodness should communicate it felf in the strictest degree of union to the Reasonable Creature, or is the Reasonable Creature incapable to receive the highest Favour? This is a great Mystery; but the Divine Omnipotence is not to be limited COLLEGIBLY

Aug. Epist. 5
Volus.
Demus Den aliquid posse, quod nos fateamur investigare non posse. In talibus rebus, totaratio facti, est potentia facientis.

limited by our narrow thoughts. Tis most reasonable to believe that God can do; what we cannot discover how it is performed. Seneca prudently observes that extraordinary effects in Nature are unaccountable to us, as to their immediate proper Causes, whilst we only confider the usual Principles by which it works. Nay, in the quid illa fa-most common works of Nature cere possit, sed tantum quid how many things are to percep- fecerit. Natur tible to Sense that none is fo stupid as to deny them, yet imperceptible to Reason as to the manner of their production ? Who understands the admirable conjunction of the Soul and Body in Man? how two Metals of lo precious and so base alloy, Gold and Lead, a Spirit and Matter, the one celestial the other earthly, should so strictly combine, and notwithstanding fuch



Quare quicquam nobis insolitum eft? quia naturam oculis non ratione comprebendimus, nec cogitamus cere possit, sed tantum quid Quæst.lib.6.

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fuch diversity in their natures and properties, imbrace with such concord in their inclinations? Now if the sharpest Eye, fixt with the greatest attention, cannot discern the manner of this Natural Union when the thing is above all doubt, can there be any pretence to disbelieve Supernatural Mysteries because we are not able to comprehend how they are effected?

3. There being infallible proofs that Jesus Christ was sent from God to make known his compassionate Counsels for the Salvation of Man, the consequence is clear and necessary, that the Doctrines of his Gospel are to be received, though never so incomprehensible to the natural understanding. There is no Demonstration more sure than the Principle of Faith, God has declared so, therefore tis

true.

true. Tis injurious to his Ho- Chap. nour to require any other proof of his Word than his Word. "Tisincomparably more certain that God cannot deceive us, than that our Understandings are not deceived. Now what is the main subject of the Gospel? It instructs us that the Word was God, and the Word was made Flesh. Can there be a more plain Declaration who Jesus Christ is, that we may conceive aright of his Natures, his Virtues, his Prerogatives and Merits? It is not possible without violence to interpret the words otherwise than they plainly fignifie, that a Divine Being assum'd the Humane Nature, and was God-Man. This was also declar'd by Jesus Christ. For when the Jews, supposing him to be a meer Man, taxt him for the violation of the Sabbath, in his doing

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ing a miraculous Cure on that day! he replied to their exception, My Father works bitherto, and I work: that is, as God is not subject to the Law of the Sabbath, but uninter-ruptedly does the Works of his merciful Providence; so I his Son work in all times without limitation. This expression the Jews truly understood to import no less than an equality with God; a Son being of the same Nature with his Father, and therefore charg'd him with Blasphemy. Our Saviour allows their Interpretation, but vindicates it from Impiety by a fur-ther declaring his Comunion with God in his Will and Power, that he perform'd Divine Works; that he might receive the fame Divine Ho. nour as the Father had. And shall we not believe this Testimony that Jesus Christ gives of himself? Did not

probed by Reafon.

not the * W ORD understand the Chap. 5. meaning of his own Expressions? could Truth deceive? was it pos-* Aut forte sible for Wisdom to speak impro-qui verbum perly? Was Power desective and onem verbi unable to declare what it would ignoravit? have us to understand? How in-et qui veritis reasonable is it then to object how ra nescivit? can this be? What pride is it to re- et qui Japibel against the Divine Revelation? stultiloquio what obstinacy to remain unsatis-erravit? fied, unless we discover how terms qui virtus est, fo distant in themselves, the high, firmitate, ut est Being, GOD, and the lowest non possit eloqui que vellet in the Sphere of Rational Beings, intelligi? Man, should be so strictly united? Hilar. lib. 8. How they should be so intimately joyn'd without confusion of Natures in one Person, that 'tis truly said, God was humbled to the form of a Servant, and Man is rais'd to the right-hand of God. Here 'tis our duty to subject our noblest

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noblest faculty the Understanding to Divine Revelation. In the Doctrines of Faith as well as in the disposures of Providence, 'tis sufficient to check presumptuous Curiosity, that God is the Author.

I shall add one Consideration more: If Jesus Christ was not what he declar'd himself to be, the Son of God, he was a most Impious Man. For 'tis Impiety in the fupreme degree, for any in the pure order of Creatures to assume Divine Honour: But the quality of his Doctrine, and sanctity of his Life, infinitly clear him from fuch a vile Charge. For is it conceivable that a Person guilty of the highest even Sacrilegious Pride, should be an Instructer of the most perfect Humility to the World? 'Tis the special Character of his Religion that distinguishes it from

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all other Institutions, that it pre- Chap. ferves the Divine Glory entire; that it makes the profoundest impressions in the hearts of Men of their meanness and vanity, and inspires them with an humble sense of their infinit distance from God. And for the holiness of his Life, I shall produce a Testimony that can be liable to no exception; 'tis of Porphiry a Platonic Philosopher, who excelled as in Learning and Eloquence, so in Malignity, the most furious Enemies of Christianity; yet he was by irrelistible evidence compell'd to acknowledge, That Fesus Christ was a most pious and Excellent Person, and that after his Death he ascended into Heaven. And is it credible that the same Person, whose Life was a glorious Example of Holiness and Righteousness, should be guilty of the most tran-**Scendent**

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possible for an unprejudic'd mind to entertain such a suspicion.

4. That the Son of God was here below in a mean state, that he was exposed to the most cruel and ignominious death, if we consider the great end of his condescending goodness, it will appear to be most worthy of him; and that there is no contradiction in the things themselves, but in the perverse minds of Insidels: For,

First, He was to redeem the World not in the way of Majesty, but by humble Obedience, and Sufferings. Thus it was ordered by Divine Wisdom for the honour of God's Attributes and Government. Now if he had appear'd in sensible Glory, the design of his coming had been frustrated: who would have dared to condemn

him

him to the infamous death of the Chap Cross? who would have shed his Blood, the price of our Redemption? And 'tis very observable that our Saviour made no use of his Supernatural Power, when the doing a Miracle before Herod would have struck him with the reverence of him as a Divine Man, and might have preferved him from Death. Nay, when the glittering Host of Heaven, all the Orders of Angels were in Arms ready upon his least Call to have come fwifter than Lightning for his refare, yet he meekly yeelded himfelf up a bloody Sacrifice to God, and an ignominious Spectacle to Men. For thus it became him to fulfil all Righteoulness.

Secondly; Another great End of his Coming was to found a Spiritual Eternal Kingdom; He

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was constituted a new Adam, to regenerate Men to an holy bleffed Life, that were condemned in the first Adam to Death and Misery. Therefore his Life was a continual exercise of Self-denyal, a pattern of Innocence and Patience, of doing good and fuffering evil. Thus he convinces us that nothing is valuable in God's account but Holiness. Thus by his own Example he instructs us in the divine Philosophy, to despile the good and evil things here, in order to our everlasting happiness. He a scended to Heaven by the way of fufferings, and calls us to follow him. The fruit of Bleffedness is ingrafted on the thorns of Poverty and Persecution for his Name-Take. The Laws of his Kingdom are inscribed on the Body of his Cross, and must be copyed in the Hearts

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Hearts of his Subjects. And for Chap. 5. this Reason when the Apostles, who after his Resurrection had some reliques of their carnal conceit, that the Kingdom of GOD should come with observation for its external splendor) ask'd him, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the Kingdom of Israel? to raise their Thoughts and Affections above Earthly things, he answered, The Holy-Ghost shall come upon you, and ye shall be Witnesses of me, both in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the utmost ends of the Earth. Their preaching his Life and Death should be attended with the power of the Spirit, to dispense a vigorous Influence into the hearts of Men for his Imitati-And certainly his Example is of admirable use and profit. For thus he sweetens and makes honourable 04

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nourable those Vertues, the exercise of which were very difficult and unpleasing either in respect of their quality, being contrary to fleshly lusts, or as they expose to Contempt in the opinion of the World. For who can refuse, or be asham'd to practise the most severe Self-denyal, when in that he is made a Copy of so Divine an Original as the Son of God? Now confidering what an influence his Afflicted state has to procure Eternal Happiners for fallen Man, and to prepare Man for it, was it unbecoming him to descend thus low? Is it unbecoming that God loves as God? that as infinite Wisdom and Power appeard in the Creation, so Infinite Mercy appears in our Redemption? What is more Divine than infinitely to exceed all the Ideas we can frame of

of Perfect Love? To do greater Charlings for his Enemies, than Men are willing to do for their dearest Friends? and where Sin abounds that Grace superabounds? Thus the Eye of Reason clear d by Revelation, sees that the voluntary Humiliation of the Son of God for a time, is so far from diminishing, that it exalts his Majesty. This is the great Argument and Motive of the Adoration and solemn Praise that Reasonable Creatures shall for ever pay unto him, wherein his derivative Glory consists.

From what has been discours'd we may see the just grounds of our firm Assent and perfect Adherence to the Doctrine of the Gospel. There are not only sufficient but abundant Motives to induce our belief, so that it is an extreme

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Chap. 5. treme Wonder that any to whom it is revealed, should not see the Truth so illustriously visible. The only account of fuch Infidelity is given by the Apostle: The God of this World hath blinded the eyes of them which believe not, left the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, Should Shine upon them. The love of some Lust fleshly or spiritual, render Men'averse from receiving it. The Mysteries of Godline's are not confin'd to the specularive mind, but are for moral ends, to regulate our lives. From hence it is that the cordial belief of them very much depends on the temper and disposition of the Soul. The fincere humble Enquirer has an eminent advantage in the difcovery of the truth and spiritual excellencies of the Gospel, above those who are over-rul'd by corrupt

rupt habits. For the carnal heart Chap. either wholly turns the mind from thinking on those most sacred and concerning objects, or weakens its intention that it does not seriously and duly consider them. Men will studiously apply themselves to secular Arts, and can discorn the truth of abstruse Mathematical Theorems, that are not distaltful to their evil affections; yet though the Principles of Christian Faith are as unquestionable as the clearest Propositions in Geometry, they will not ponder those things that may convince and perswade them to believe what is directly oppofite to their Lusts. Besides, as corrupt humours vitiate the palate, and make what is pleasant bitter to the taste; so vicious desires darken and deprave the mind, and incline it to judge of Doctrines to

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be true or false as they are favourable or disagreeing to them. Carnal perfons fortity every Objection that may render the Mysteries of Godliness unlikely and incredible, and will be partial for Sensuality. Of this we have a great instance in the first rejection of the Gospel. The Jews expected the Meffiah would come with pompous Wonders, and external Magnificence; that he would deliver them from the Roman Yoke, and found an Universal Monarchy for them, and according to those carnal fancies they would understand the Promises concerning him. Now though JESUSCHRIST approved himself to be the Son of God, the true Messiah, by the Sanctity of his Life, the Rectitude of his Doctrine, and the Divinity of his Miracles, yet for the poverty and

and meannels of his Condition, being without any fenfible shew of Greatness and Glory, they despised him as most unworthy that Divine Relation and Office. Tho in him all the Characters of the Meßiah were conspicuous, and the Scriptures declare expresly, that the Messiah the Prince should be cut off, but not for himself, but to make reconciliation for Iniquity, and to bring in everlasting Righteousness: yet they were so prepossest with the Ideas of a Terrene Felicity, that they would interpret all the Scriptures by that measure, as if the Messiah should come into the World to repair no other ruines but of their Temporal State and Liberty: Therefore they spake of him with fcornful titles; as for this Fellow we know not from whence he is: And, is not this the Carpenter? Shall the glorious

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Chap. 5. glorious Prophecies of the Mestah be accomplish'd in him? Shall be have Dominion from Sea to Sea, and from the River to the ends of the Earth? Shall all Kings bow down before him, and all Nations ferve him? There was nothing to fatisfie their fight in his outward appearance and Retinue, and his Miraculous Condescention, so much below their expectations, was more powerful to harden them in unbelief, than all his fupernatural Operations to induce them to believe in him. And as the Jews from their affection to Secular things, were enemies to the Gospel; so the Heathen Philosophers from Spiritual Pride: for they vainly affected the praise of Knowledge and Vertue, as the fruit of their own mind, and the product of their own will. They did not consider God as the Foun-

Fountain of Truth; and whether Chap the Ray of his Knowledg comes directly and immediately into us, or by reflection from others, the glory of it is entirely due to him. Belides, the great Mysteries of Godline snot being fuitable to their first Opinions, were rejected with difdain as foolish Impossibilities. And in every Age fince, even in the pale of the Church, there are some secret Infidels that esteem the Gospel a Fable, and some who peremtorily deny the fundamental Articles of Christianity. Those who are flaves to their eyes and appetites will raise Clouds to ob-Soure that Truth that forbids their dear Lusts upon pain of Damnation. The pretended difficulty of Belief, is but a thin transparent pretence, the difficulty of Practice is the true cause of their rejecting the Gospel.

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Gospel. They would not have the Chap. 5. Precepts of it to be their duty, and therfore are unwilling to acknowledg the Doctrines of it to be true. And those who set up a Tribunal in their own Understandings to which Divine Revelation must fubrit, will not believe what is above their presumptuous Reason. But that the Soul exempt from passions and prejudice has no just temptation to disbeleive the Christian Doctrine, is evident; in that fo many Persons in whom the concurrence of Wifdom and Vertue was equally flourishing and excellent, after the most exact difcussion, imbrac'd it as the Heavenly Truth. If there were falleness in its Principles, or weakness in its Proof, how could it scape their discovery? And that they were fincere in their belief is above alt

all doubt; for they willingly sa-Chap. crificed all that is valuable and dear in this life for the profession of it. Now was it ever known that any person would knowingly choose an Errour so destructive? The Will seduc'd by Sense imbraces sometimes that that is condemn'd by Reason, but it never adheres to those things that are contrary both to Reason and Sense By this it appears that Infidelity has no just plea from the insufficiency of the proofs the Christian Religion, which have fully fatisfied the wifest, the most considerate, and sincere part of Mankind. A corrupt Heart is the spring-and principle of the illusions of the mind in things that concern Salvation.

2. The Gospel propounds to us the most proper and powerful motives of love to God. In the vifible

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fible World there is a Representation so conspicuous and full of his Divine Majesty, Power & Wisdom that form'd and regulates all things, that 'tis not possible but the attentive regarding of it, will make impressions of reverence and fear, will raise our esteem and admiration. But those are dead sentiments without Love. And that in the guilty Creature fearful of God's Wrath, must be first excited by the hopes of his Pardoning Mercy. Now the Love and Kindness of God our Saviour appear'd to Man in his Redemption, in the most eminent manner. Though in that bleffed Work the Divine Perfections are relucent in various effects, Wisdom design'd it, Power accomplish'd it, Holiness and Righteousness was gloriously declar'd in it; yet, as tis applied to the benefit of Man,

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'tis the sole effect of Wise, Almigh-Chap. 5.
ty, Holy, Tender Love. Mercy soften'd God's Bowels, open'd Heaven, sent down his Son to be one with us in nature, that he might exchange his Merits and Blessedness for our guilt and misery. Miraculous Love! to make his only begotten Son our Brother, to humible him to the condition of a Servant, that we most unworthy to be his Servants should be advanc'd to be his Children: Nay, to expose him to the death of a Malefactor, equally ignominious and painful, that we Malefactors might obtain Life and Glory. If ever Love deserv'd the title of Excess, tis this; for though not without Reason, yet 'tis without all bounds and measure. 'Tis so far above our thought, that 'tis hard to have a firm belief of it. What the Pfal-P 2 mist

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mist speaks of the temporal Deliverance of the Church, is more justly applicable to its Spiritual Eternal Deliverance, When the Lord turned again the Captivity of Sion, we were like to them that dream. As if a poor man fancying in a dream that he is a King, adorn'd with the Enfigns of Royalty, and between hopes and fears should enquire of himself, Am I awake and in my right mind? Is this Scepter, this Robe, this Crown real? Or, is it all the pleasant deceit of Imagination? And how can we reflect upon the amazing Grace of God that brings Salvation, but fuch thoughts will arise? Is it true that God did not spare his most innocent and dear Son to absolve us guilty Rebels? Did he dye for his Father's Enemies and his own? Unparallel'd Love! only to be fully conceiv'd

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ceiv'd by an infinite Understand-Chap ing. That the Divine Father should seem to love us more than his only begotten Son, in giving him up to death for us; that the Son of God should love us more than his own Life, in dying to reconcile us to his Father, were incredible, but for the Testimony of God himself. Who can resist the fweet Violence, the powerful Attractives of this Love? How can any person that has the use of Reason to consider this great Love, not be inflam'd with affection towards his Saviour? How is it possible that these wide extremes should be found united, The infinite Goodness of God, and the equal unthankfulness of Men? that they hate and offend whom they are obliged by the dearest titles to love and serve. Methinks such unna-

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Chap. 5. tural Ingratitude should only be found in Hell; where despair of Redemption has blotted out in those lost Souls the memory of the Love and Merits of the Redeemer. But that on Earth where his most precious Blood was shed, and is applicable for the Salvation of all that will receive him by Faith and Love, that here injuries are returned for his inestimable Benefits, is the most enormous Impiety. What shall we render unto him for our Evils which he hath suffered, for his Benefits which he gives to us? All that we can endure for his sake, is not comparable to one Thorn of his bleeding Crown. Let us return Love, that is fo infinitely due to him. Wo to us if we do not love him.

Paulin,

Consider further, that the same most free Love that gave the Redeemer for us, has reveal'd him to

us.

us. For who could have imagin-Chap. ed that the Son of God should descend from his Throne in Heaven, and from the Bosom of his Father, into the Womb of a Virgin-Mother, and become Man, to fave us by his Sufferings? Who could have any hopes that the human nature, our low and heavy earth, should ascend above the Heavens? The World by natural light knew no more of his coming to recover it from misery, than it perceived when the same Word in the Creation rais'd it from the Abyls of Nothing. This should make us most sensible of his favour. But every one will pretend to love his Saviour. Now that we may not deceive our selves with a flashy Affection, the Rule of Tryal is plain, Our love to him must correspond in its kind and quality with

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with his love to us. And that was declar'd in doing and fuffering what was requisit for our Salvation. The precious Tree does not heal the Sore by its fragrancy, but must be wounded to give it Soveraign Balm. Our Saviour did not only express in words his compassionate sense of our misery, that alone had been sufficient, but loved us and washt us from our Sins in his Blood. After his Refurrection he fhewed his pierced Hands and Side to the Disciples, not only the real proofs that he was Jesus that suffered, but of his Love. They might see his Heart open and Hands rent for them. And such a love is due to him. That which is only productive of Leaves and Blosoms, of affectionate words of our Saviour, but unfruitful in the works of Holiness, may deceive Men

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Men by a fair appearance, but not Chap, his eye, who judges of the truth and strength of our love to him by our keeping his Commandments. In short, as an active Heat proceeds by an emanation from the Fire; so a chearful Readiness and Zeal to do the Will of Christ naturally flows from Love consecrated to him. But to enforce this the more, let us further consider,

3. We are obliged by all the titles of Gratitude and Justice, of natural & Divine Reason, to walk as becomes the Gospel of Christ.

First, The dignity of the Author requires this of us. The Son of God came down from Heaven; and if the Allusion may be allowed,

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Deposuit radios, propiusque accedere
jussit;

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familiarly teach us our Duty in order to our happiness: And if the Word spoken by Angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation, which as the first, be-

gan to be spoken by the Lord?

Secondly; The perfection and

observation, "That those Laws "are best for Government, that are "so clear and particular that no-"thing is left to the will of the in-"feriour Judg, who is not usually "so capable, and pure from by-"respects as the Lawgiver. The Gospel is a Light wherein all Vertues shine in their bright eminence,

and all Vices blush in their odious

deformity. It excludes all obscurity, that the meanest understand-

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plainness of this Rule. 'Tis a wife

Arist. Rhet.

ings may see the way to happiness. Chap. There can be no palliations and excuses for those who will rather argue than obey. For the revelation of God's Will is so full and open in it, that 'tis direct Rebellion not to yeeld entire subjection to it: And they who know their Massers Will, and do it not, shall be beaten

with many stripes.

Thirdly; To commend it to our practice we have an Example of perfect obedience set before us. If Jesus Christ had represented in the World no other person but of the World no other person but of the World and Wisdom of his Father; as a Master to regulate and guide us by his Commands, had revealed to us the Secrets of another World, and then ascended to Heaven; the highest Reverence and Observance had been due to his Laws. But to encourage and edge our industry he

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Chap. 5. he was pleased to exhibit in his Life a Patern of universal Obedience. He gave us Rules of such perfect Holiness, that there seemed no necessity of his practice for our instruction: And the living image of his Laws was so visible in his Actions, that his sole Example affords us a Model of entire San-City. There is no kind of Vertue from the lowest to the most Heroick, of which he might not say as he did to his Disciples in his last Supper, Ihave given you an Example, that ye (hould do as I have done to you. And what should be more powerful in the breasts of Christians than a facred Ambition to be like the Son of God, than a dear Affection to be conform'd to their Saviour?

Fourthly; To excite us to our Duty, the Gospel offers such a Reward to encourage Obedience,

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and threateneth such prepar'd Chap. Plagues against Disobedience, that unless a Man be miraculously transform'd into a stupid Beast, he cannot but be moved by them.

Now what darkness of mind, or rather what perverinels of heart is it, if the great Interest of the one and the other Eternity, the Blessed and the Miserable, be not sufficient to work upon us? But alas! how many who pretend to be the Disciples of Christ, do not obey him as their Master, love him as their Redeemer, nor fear him as their Judge? They live as if Christ had commanded them to please, not to crucify the flesh, and the lusts thereof: as if he had bid them let all their Affections, their Loves, Defires, Hopes, Joys in present perishing things, and not in everlafting to come; to labour for the Riches of this

this World, as if they were eternal

222

rogativa de

ftianitatis

Sumus, quia

Christianus

populus esse

Gubern. lib. 4.

Inhabitants on the Earth, and not strangers and pilgrims in the way to Heaven. These are worse Enemies of our Saviour than the Heathens that do not know him, or the Jews that deny him. For wear-Que cum i- ing the Livery of his Servants, they ta sint, magna | defame his most holy Profession, videlicet præobscure his Glory, and blaspheme nomine Chri-him in their lives. If Infidels that never heard the found of the Goblandiri pofspel, should see their conversatiita agimus, ac on, what judgment would they boc ipsu quod make of the Excellence of Christ. and the holiness of his Law? They would * blaspheme his Goodness dicimur, opprobrin Chri-without defence. Unholy Christi esse videa- stians are the most guilty Sinners * Æstimari in the World. And their punishde cultoribus suis potest ille qui colitur. Quomodo enim bonus Magister est, cujus tam malos videmus discipulos. 2 Salv. De

ment

ment will be heightned accordingly: For they exasperate Mercy, and make the Blood of Atonement to cry for Vengeance against them. If it be extreme perversiones to disbelieve the Gospel after so clear a Revelation from God; what degree of folly and wickedness is it, for those who believe its Truth, to contradict the evidence and design of it in their lives, as if there were no doubt of its falsness?

FINIS.

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